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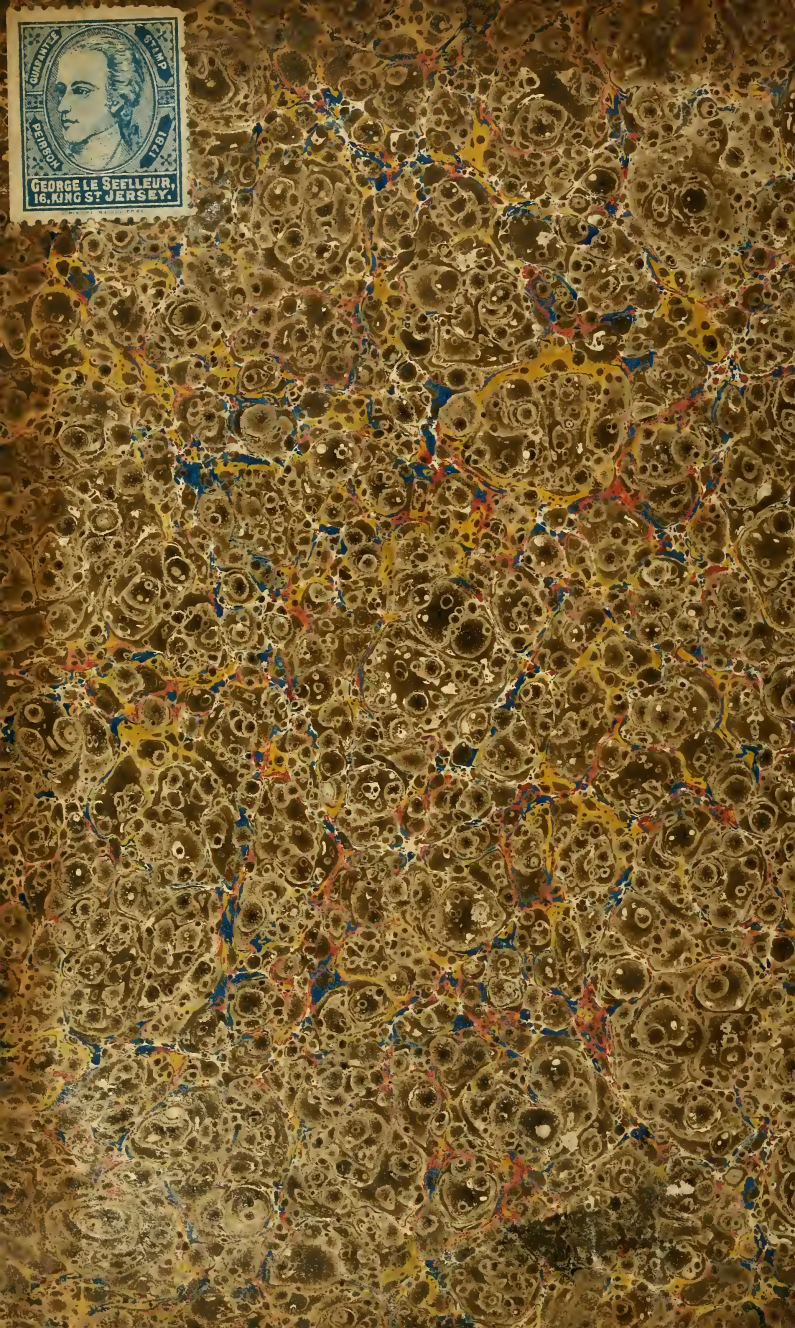
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THE WHITE MAN'S GRAVE:

A VISIT

TO

SIERRA LEONE,

IN 1834.

BY F. HARRISON RANKIN.

It is quite customary to ask in the morning, how many died last night.
M. A. FALCONBRIDGE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.
(SUCCESSOR TO HENRY COLBURN.)
1836.

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TO

THE HON. W. H. MACAULEY,

CHIEF JUDGE OF THE HIGH COURT OF MIXED COMMISSION
AT SIERRA LEONE,

THESE VOLUMES

ARE OFFERED,

SEEKING A "BRIEF IMMORTALITY"

FOR THE MEMORY OF SCENES TO WHICH HIS FRIENDSHIP

AND HOSPITALITY GAVE ADDITIONAL INTEREST.

PREFACE.

MAJESTY, moving in royal progresses, is preceded by a graduated line of peers. The noblest follow in the wake of the less noble, and the latest creations place themselves before the titles of ancient date.

The etiquette of books enforces the same rule. The *last* portion written, facetiously named the PREFACE, takes its station in front of the volume, and claims the first notice of the reader; whence it may occasionally chance to be mistaken by exoterics and the uninitiated for the first-born, and to enjoy a respect due to its subsequent but elder brethren. It is the Esau of chapters. It is Epilogue

borrowing the privilege and larynx of Prologue.

In consequence of this clever rule of precedence, the Preface is enabled to speak advisedly. Its dicta on the subjects and objects of the volume are clearly results of experience, not shadowy vaticinations. In the present case, therefore, it can state that the aim of the following pages has been to import sundry African facts into England; that these facts regard a colony little visited and little known, but, like all matters little known, the ground of much theory.

Few spots upon the earth's face have been so uniformly pronounced deformities without having been seen. None hesitate to condemn it. It is deemed a land of miasma, contagion, and death. It bears the terrific and poetic title of the "White Man's Grave." Its aspect is generally suspected to present a uniformity of flats,

spongy with swamps, and dotted with tombstones, over which poisonous fogs eternally brood. Such opinions are prevalent,—they so occupy the mind as to supplant the interest due to the colony, as the centre and head-quarters of operations for suppressing the traffic in slaves on the African coast, and as the asylum and foster-mother of the captives when emancipated from the chains and confinement of their prison-ship.

With regard to the climate of Sierra Leone, and its effect on the constitution of Europeans, facts which cannot be controverted, and which none could desire to find assailable, expect in some measure to disperse the prejudices which have long mystified our ideas of the colony.

In connexion with the subject of Slavery, it may be observed, that since the following notice of it was written, Government has given fresh attention to

the treaties existing with Spain. If the new convention with that power be not in all respects perfect, it at least enlarges the scope enjoyed by the British for checking the maritime traffic in slaves. The recent increase in the number of captured slave-ships on the coast, by our men-of-war, painfully proves the extent to which the trade is carried on.

I have not touched, even, I believe, incidentally, on the expense of the colony to the mother-country. The reason was, that I have introduced no topic which did not either fall under personal observation, or excite a personal interest. The opinion that Sierra Leone is expensive, is only one of many fallacies hastily and unwisely adopted. One circumstance must be considered, which will reconcile the most economical of philanthropists, whoever he may be, to the continued maintenance of the settlement; namely, that the large

Parliamentary grants are absorbed, not by the colony for its civil administration, but by the means employed to enforce the suppression of the slave-trade.

Premiums, at so much sterling per head, for liberated captives, many hundreds of whom may be captured in the same vessel; the maintenance of these unfortunate outcasts when received and adopted into the British territory; the vast establishment of the Liberated African Department, with its superintendents, officers, and clerks; the complex and expensive machinery of the Courts of Mixed Commission, for deciding on the legality of captures;—these, and these alone, call for considerable grants of money. The vituperated colony nearly repays the whole of its *own* civil expenses by its custom-house receipts and other revenues. Were Sierra Leone to be immediately abandoned, and Jamaica to be appointed as the

future seat of adjudication and emancipation of the victims of the slave-commerce, no saving would be effected; but on the establishment of the above-named courts and departments upon that island, to Jamaica would be transferred the parliamentary grants, with one simple alteration—that the grants must be *considerably increased.* The only question to be determined is, whether England shall continue to spend a portion of her revenue in the noble work of liberating the negro captive, and of crushing the system which makes our fellow-men articles of an infamous commerce. If so, the expense will be less at Sierra Leone than if a spot were selected more distant from the scene of rapine, and less congenial to the constitution of the liberated. Separating, then, the cost of the colony itself from the cost of a process by no means inherently connected with it, it will be

admitted that Sierra Leone is actually one of the least burdensome of our foreign possessions in a pecuniary point of view.

An attempt to excite a favourable interest in a spot which has hitherto looked in vain for an advocate, and to endeavour to stem the tornado of public prejudice, is at least chivalric, if it prove not successful. The beautiful peninsula has, hitherto, received the rough treatment commonly accorded to the forlorn. "Strike him hard, *for he has no friends*," seems to be a general rule applicable to places as well as to persons.

It will be seen, that in the texture of the subsequent leaves, details concerning permanent phenomena, the origin and customs of surrounding tribes, and natural productions have been avoided : the floating froth has been skimmed, and little of the solid substance put forward in dry form. It has been so, first, because many might

otherwise have been deterred from seeking acquaintance with the interesting but scandalised little colony, whose gossip may amuse; and secondly, because the admirable work of Dr. Winterbottom, published about forty years ago, records such matters and phenomena as are *permanent* in that part of the world, with an elaborate research and sagacious discrimination that would render rivalry as hopeless as it is unnecessary. At the period of that publication, the colony was an infant, and none could foretell its present characteristics, describe its diversified population, or develope the working of the system for suppressing the slave-trade; neither did experience permit opinion respecting the effect of climate on a European constitution. Native customs have not changed; the products of the country are the same; the peculiarities of different tribes have not varied; and to

such as desire to step from the confines of the English colony, and to study by what neighbours it is surrounded, the volumes of Dr. Winterbottom will give information as applicable to the present moment as to that at which they were penned.

In casting the eye over the map of Africa, it is gratifying to note, scattered along the shores of that vast and barbarous continent, the names of European settlements; centres of spreading civilization, wholesome as the well-springs in her own parched and desolate deserts. The Cape of Good Hope, Cape Coast, and then the American Liberia, Sierra Leone, the Gambia, and the French Goree, and Algiers, may be regarded as so many bright points for the wide radiation of knowledge and improvement. Reflecting on what the Americans, French, and English at these settlements *may* effect, and what

Mohammed Ali has already effected in Egypt, the dreams of the African philanthropist may be allowed to picture a future happier than the past.

March 1836.

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THE WHITE MAN'S GRAVE.

CHAPTER I.

ARRIVAL.

Approach towards Sierra Leone. — A courteous Pilot.—Black Servants.—The Head of the Law. —Somnolency.—Insect Companions.—Early Impressions. — First Morning Scene. — Animation. —A Funeral.

For three weary days our gallant ship had apparently become aware of its approach towards an evil shore. No longer cutting a rapid and gay path through legions of waves, she had lingered as if reluctant to bear her crew to the land of pestilence and death. The atmosphere, so clear around the Cape de Verds, had thickened with mist; respiration was im-

peded by the heavy, hot air; the sea, too, had grown sluggish; the dolphins, those rainbows of the deep, and the high-wheeling tropic bird, the only snow-flake of these regions, had disappeared. Every object around wore a grave and warning aspect. This external gloom produced its effect upon the ship's company. The evening sports and songs on deck had ceased to follow the toils of the day; the men had lost pleasure in their amusements, and many speculated upon their chance of surviving. One alone, the second mate—and a fine tight fellow he was, ever foremost in duty or in a joke,—found room for a wager upon the subject. He was not destined to return; and he died far from his native land.

Sierra Leone labours under a singularly bad reputation; and he who for the first time bids farewell to England, his home, and his friends, for this colony, may fairly understand the feelings of the soldier who leads a forlorn hope. In the cabin, conversation naturally turned to

the ill reports of the settlement; and our captain, who was a religious man, more frequently than at the commencement of our voyage, put aside the chart for meditation over the Bible.

The contrast, perhaps a casual one, between the joyous luxury of the golden sea surrounding the sweet Canary Islands, and the close, dull, unhealthy atmosphere which now girded us, made serious havoc amongst our gayer tendencies. In fact, we believed the usual stories of the white man's grave, the place of our destination; and such belief is no friend to merriment. No one, however, seemed to entertain fear for himself; each lamented the probable fate of his friend: but that happy reliance upon one's own good fortune which allows men to seek danger, and nerves them on through all the uncertainties of life, forbade despondency.

The shore of Africa became visible under our lee, — a low, shelvy land, which extends for several degrees in an almost uniformly dead level. Upon that

shore the captain of his Majesty's surveying ship had, the year before, been treacherously destroyed by the savages.

At length, towering mountains, blue and dim in distance, were perceived ahead rising from the water. The sun set, and through the darkness which ensued within a few minutes, gleams of light shot from the hill sides; others appeared; then clusters, spreading from the horizon to a considerable height. Sierra Leone was before us; and the number of these fires — which were of burning forests — proved the extent and loftiness of its mountain ranges.

Whilst slowly creeping onwards, a long stream of phosphoric flashings marked the advance of a boat. A black pilot, of very American externals, boarded us. We were at the mouth of the estuary.

The pilot underwent a cumbrous catechism, as is usual when intercourse with mankind has been nearly cut off for weeks. It was novel to find a black treating a white man with aristocratic independence.

In due time, however, his dignity condescended to unbend itself "a few," as he would have expressed it; but never so far as to allow us to forget that he was a free black man of Freetown, capital of the free colony for the location of freed slaves. If his manner was not free, it was because he was perfectly free to treat his equals according to his own good pleasure.

"How far is it to the town?" meekly inquired the captain.

"A few, I guess," was drawled out as a sufficient answer.

"Shall we not soon drop anchor?"

"When we get there, I judge."

The captain made a different tack.

"Pray, sir, is the colony considered healthy at present?"

"More or less, I expect."

"Have there been many deaths amongst the white residents lately?"

All pressed round, intently listening to catch the answer to a question so full of interest. After a pause it was repeated.

"Can you inform us, sir, whether many whites have died lately?"

"Can't ye clew up the mainsail?" was the sole reply.

The captain, thus foiled, and superseded in command, quietly descended into the cabin, opened his book, nor came again on deck.

Having thus formidably displayed his nonchalance to the commander, our sable friend grew affable; satisfied with having demolished the master, he spoke more civilly to the men. Fortune kindly protected me from repulse. Perhaps he held a mere passenger lightly; perhaps his ebony heart had been melted at the sight of a white lady, a fellow-voyager, a phenomenon nearly as rare as a palm-tree in England, and doubtless as great an object of curiosity. Amidst the tornado of questions which now burst upon him, he civilly ended the anxiety of friendship by assuring me of the perfect health of the Chief-Justice. Friends long parted by time and distance have an electric affi-

nity towards each other, and before the anchor had plunged into the deep, I found myself seated in the pilot's boat and darting to the wharf. Sensations are matters not to be prated about; their intensity, however, is encouraged by situations of extreme novelty, and here every thing was new. Four Kroos, tattooed and unclothed savages, with complexions well suited to the night, pulled to the shore. Exhausted with overpowering heat, I leaned back in the boat, marking the lines of fire which glanced from the water when ruffled by the splash of the oars, listening to the harsh uncouth voices of the men, who maintained their conversation in their native language, and speculating upon my reception where a visit had been promised but not announced.

The town, although close at hand, was not to be perceived. No light shone from any window; those which had been seen from the sea, of woods purposely fired for health or for agricultural preparation, were hidden by the intervening mountain.

A singularly heavy stillness prevailed. When the boat struck, one of the Kroos leaped upon the wharf, and, with but small ceremony, lifted the white man from his seat, and placed him once more upon land.

For many days the heat had been most relaxing. On shipboard, the naked feet and almost naked persons of the sailors had been matters of positive envy to those whose station compelled more attention to outward show than to comfort. Any change had seemed to promise some release from the persecution of warmth; and a vague, indefinite expectation had arisen that the shore might prove cooler than the baked and cracking decks. I had, however, no sooner landed than a furnace appeared to have opened its parching breath upon me. The first feeling was that of suffocation, succeeded by a sudden faintness, which had nearly caused a fall: a volume of heat rushed upwards from the ground, and some moments elapsed before I could proceed,

leaning for support upon the muscular arm of the Kroo guide. Little does a stranger dream that habit will reconcile him to this temperature, and that perchance, as often happens, the glow of the tropics may be esteemed luxurious. Utter darkness reigned, no object but the mere outline of the men was visible; but, to compensate for the abeyance of eyesight, another sense was unexpectedly assailed. In this climate, the air around and above, and the earth beneath, salute the newly-arrived visitor with a flood of sound. Every thing denotes life: a constant buzz of crickets, and of a thousand loquacious insects, bewilders the ear. Few impressions are more remarkable than that excited by the endless whiz and hum of our swarming and creeping fellow-creatures. The open air, the sheltered piazza, the enclosed room, are so many orchestras of pigmy trumpeters, to whose concerts, however, the ear soon learns to give little heed.

Our path lay up an abrupt bank of

forty or fifty feet, upon the crown of which, immediately over the sea, stands Freetown. The Kroo guide paused at the gates of a large court-yard. Bells and knockers being European luxuries unknown in Sierra Leone, he summoned attention by a long and loud cry. He had stopped at the mansion of a gentleman whose high rank in the colony was at once denoted by the crowd of servants who rushed from the house, armed with lanthorns and torches, to investigate the nature of the intrusion. An Englishman's idea of a black man is usually formed upon the model of those negroes, with flat noses and *rouleau* lips, who trail through the streets in quest of stray pence, and endeavour to increase the pity which their hideous countenances excite, by most pathetic drawings suspended round their necks, of a kneeling African in chains, writhing under the flagellations of a merciless white man. As well might we attempt to study the nature and qualities of an Arabian or a Barb by look-

ing upon the sorry jade which boasts no higher pretensions than the shafts of a sandcart. The slaves who find their way from the West India plantations to England are totally unlike the majority of the free natives of Africa: they are, with few exceptions, specimens of the lowest grade of mankind, and are taken from certain tribes despised by their black neighbours. Amongst the more intellectual and more cultivated, as noble features, as lofty an expression, as fine a countenance is discovered as Europe could offer.

The group which came forward with lights to answer the summons of the Krooman were chiefly youths, and all were dressed alike in the simplest of liveries. It consisted of loose white trousers, and a white shirt, very full and open, which contrasted strongly with the jet of head and chest, arms and feet. I never saw a body of servants picturesque before; these certainly were so. Escorted by the whole of them, we arrived at the house of

his honour, distant at few paces. I have spoken of the darkness of night; the time might have been nine o'clock, yet were the inhabitants already in profound slumber.

In England, the ready police would have bustled out and captured our party, who strenuously endeavoured to break the peace of the neighbourhood. Euphony was not the forte of my zealous black assistants; to create a noise sufficient to awaken the sleepers, was their sole object. To the task they lent surprising energy; yet every modulation between a scream and a growl, with the occasional harmony of both, were long ineffectual. Finally, a jalousie aloft was heard to open slowly, and a nightcapped head was perceived protruding, which proved to be no other than the Head of the law himself. A few moments realised to me the widely-celebrated hospitality and generous welcome of a tropical host.

My excellent friend deemed the offices of his servants necessary, and invited me

to witness the process of arousing them from their slumber; an amusing task, although not by any means an easy one. Their deathlike drowsiness was mentioned, and that strange and unconquerable aversion to the repose of a bed, which leads them to choose for their resting-place any spot where they may chance to find themselves when dismissed from the labours of the day. On this occasion the heavy major-domo was discovered lying upon his back on the top of the staircase leading to the kitchen; his outstretched legs were dangling upon the steps, the upper portion of his body was reposing upon the floor of the verandah. Many rough efforts were necessary in order to still the booming tones issuing from his black proboscis; and, as soon as domestic arrangements had been concluded under his auspices, he again carelessly threw himself upon the bare boarding of the corridor, and recommenced his *sostenuto solo.* The lethargy of sleeping negroes is miraculous; nothing short of excessive per-

sonal violence can shake it from them: the bite of the insects, and their excursions over the face and body at night, by no means disturb them; they acquire a habit of striking these intruders even whilst soundly asleep,—so that should they receive a smart blow upon the face or even a kick upon the head from a friend desirous of awakening them, the chance is that their hand is instantly and mechanically raised to clap the injured part or rub it, under the dreaming impression that the pain has been caused by a cockroach or musquito: the hand falls, and they slumber on. Cannibals have quiet consciences.

Far from cool England, sleep was long denied the white man, simmering upon his hard mattress, with its single covering (and even that too weighty) of a slight cotton sheet; the wise precaution of examination having been duly taken, to discover whether any treacherous scorpion or sly centipede lurked beneath the pillow. Night, the friend of the weary,

here becomes his foe, and calls in an army of enemies to join in hostility. The enormous cockroach crawls over the body, and, if permitted, nibbles the end of the fingers, producing a wound of tedious cure. The prying mantis swarms; a fat, loathsome green insect, held in great awe by the blacks, who believe that it causes blindness by attacking the eye with its crablike claws. Musquitoes are not frequent, it is true; since, according to report, the climate of Sierra Leone is too deadly even for these persecutors of the human race, the offspring of pestilential marshes: yet, a single musquito in the chamber will destroy all hope of repose. The little bug-a-bugs, small amber ants, infesting every house, and eating away its woodwork, spread themselves thickly over the bed; large tarantulas fall from the ceiling upon the sleepers; gigantic black crickets ingeniously perch themselves near the ear in some hidden nook, and "grate harsh music:" but, above all, the intolerable prickly heat plunges into the white

man its thousand stings, and makes him start from his couch in despair. For long I attributed this torture to the malice of insects.

Sleep had not long condescended to visit me, when the rolling of morning-gun fire intimated sunrise. Dimness still hovered around, when almost instantaneously the full glare of tropical daylight flashed forth, and discovered the gorgeous mountain-on-mountain scenery of the colony.

Immediately in front, towering behind the town, rose the Barrack Hill; Leicester Mountain and the Sugar Loaf beyond,—a peak of nearly three thousand feet in height, clothed to the summit with forests of palms, locust, and pullow, or wild cotton trees, whose lofty and rich foliage brought the view apparently close to the eye. Wide streets presented an assemblage of houses and huts of every shape, of every material, of every style of architecture, and of none; each generally surrounded by gardens crowded with the

dark orange and lime trees, the soft green banana and plantain, with their broad leaf, and the grotesque papaw, whose slender shaft, graced by a handful of leaves and a cluster of green and orange fruit, creates the idea of a vegetable beau of refined lankness, sumptuously coroneted with thick ringlets and luscious whiskers.

From the mountain paths descended groups of maidens bringing produce for the early market, bearing on the head calabashes filled with red and black pines, bananas, sour sops, water-melons, mangoes, and other temptations for the palate. Next came the more loaded matrons, with the privileged distinction of partial drapery, carrying their little ebony piccaninies fastened to the back, and generally in sound sleep. Men, too, walked into the town, each exercising his undoubted right of choice with regard to dress, whether any or none, much or little. These principally brought bundles of coarse grass, fresh cut by the roadside, for the

day's entertainment of the Freetown horses. Strings of convicts, fettered and bound together by clanking chains, were dragging themselves to their compulsory labours. In fact, all became bustle, noise, and confusion in the vicinity.

The market-place was situated within a few yards of the window at which I stood, deeply interested in the novelty of the scene. It presented a moving mass of screaming, quarrelling, and bartering personages,—blacks, browns, siennas, bistres, sepias, umbers, jet, ebony, and carbonated,—such as might have risen from the ashes of Pompeii or Herculaneum, after having been charred. I fixed at once on the real locality of Babel.

Pigs, lean even to pity, were snuffing up the hot dust; cows, or, as they are there called, "bulls," suckling their young calves, were straying through the streets, accompanied by wandering sheep, with smooth, glossy coats of white and black, and frolicsome goats in abundance. Goats almost exclusively supply the town with

milk; some few "bulls" are milked occasionally, but seldom. Here be it remarked that physiologists consider some human attributes to be universally found even in the most dissimilar varieties of our species. One instantly struck me as the tattooed and solemn Akoo servant entered the chamber with the early cup of coffee: the milk had received a fair proportion of water, the mixture was perfectly English. It is decidedly a characteristic of humanity, although unrecognised by Pythagoras or Prichard, that milkmen are prone to dilute.

Whilst sipping the aromatic nectar,—and he who would taste coffee must throw aside Mocha, and breakfast at Sierra Leone,—as I lazily leaned through the jalousie to watch the graceful crown-birds, the purple and saffron cundoo, and the thousand glittering lizards which ran flashing in the morning sun up every wall and tree around,—and in the first enjoyment of return to land, inspired by the loveliness of the prospect, the genial

glow of a cloudless climate, and the briskness of the moving scene, had lost every gloomy association with the colony,—my eye caught an early funeral procession, that slowly accompanied to one of the cemeteries the corpse of a young white lady who had died on the previous evening. This, thought I, is indeed Sierra Leone, the European's grave!

CHAPTER II.

THE PENINSULA.

Geographical Notice.—Extent.—Analogy between Colonies and Caterpillars. — General Turner's proposed addition of Territory. — Surrounding Nations. — Timmanees — Bulloms — Liberia. — Difference of nature and object between the American and the English Colonies.

EVERY one who looks at the parliamentary grants is aware that this torrid colony is maintained for the humane purpose of giving a home and affording means of civilization to those unfortunate Africans who, having been conveyed by violence or treachery from their own land, and stowed into the slave ships and condemned to the slave markets of America, have been captured whilst upon their passage by British

cruisers, and emancipated. To restore each slave to his original tribe would be impossible; to land all upon the territory of any native chief would be to renew the miseries of bondage; the climate of Great Britain, and of all her colonies excepting those in which slavery was legal, would cut off the children of the tropics: it was, therefore, advisable that some spot should be appropriated for the purpose of receiving them, with soil adapted to supply their wants, and climate congenial to their constitutions; one, moreover, conveniently situated for the earliest reception of slaves captured along a particular line of coast. The whole process of slave liberation as carried on at the present moment, from the detention at sea to the clearance of the King's yard, will be detailed in due place.

The windward coast of Africa includes the space in which the slave-trade is most rife, and takes its name from the direction of the trade winds, which con-

stantly blow from certain quarters. It comprehends Senegambia and Guinea; extending from Senegal, in lat. 16 deg. north, to Cape Palmas, in lat. 4 deg. 26 min. south. The shore is generally remarkably flat, especially from the Bullom shore to the Gambia; so much so as to present a singular sight to the approaching voyager, of trees in long lines, apparently growing out of the water, their foliage and lofty stems standing in full view often for many hours, whilst the land beneath remains unseen. It is almost like a mockery of hope to one who has been spending weeks upon the sea, when he is at length looking out for the land which his chart pronounces near, instead of hailing the bold blue swellings of distant hill and mountain, such as generally terminate the blank horizon of the ocean, to come upon a line of palm trees emerging from the waves, few and scattered, particularly if his memory holds recollection of Montserrat or Teneriffe.

One noble exception breaks upon the monotony of this low shore, where the heaped-up mountains of Sierra Leone rise like pyramids in the desert.

The Peninsula, now entirely ceded to the British, is of considerable extent. The northern frontier stretches from Cape Sierra Leone, lat. 8 deg. 30 min. north, lon. 13 deg. 43 min. west, to the river Bunce, which marks its eastern boundary: the ocean washes its coast from the Cape to the southern point, at Kate's River, between which and the Bunce four or five miles only of land intervene. Its outline, therefore, nearly forms a triangle, two sides of which, and the centre, are mountains and valleys, green with the never-fading verdure of jungle and forest.

Discovered in the year 1442, by an expedition of the once enterprising Portuguese, under the auspices of their King, Henry, it first became interesting to the English in 1652, when the celebrated Admiral Sir J. Hawkins landing

there, made unsparing use of fire and sword, and, after perpetrating every atrocity that civilization could suggest, captured some hundreds of the natives, put them on board his vessels, and afterwards sold them as slaves for his own advantage. It was comparatively lately that England coveted its admirable situation and rich resources, and colonized it. Its earliest history, when the principal town boasted twenty-five houses, is told with tediously amusing quaintness by a fair authoress,* who wisely interweaves the account of her two voyages to Sierra Leone with that of her two successive spouses. This was in 1793, when a trading company had obtained by treaty a few acres from a native chief; the exact extent of the cession being uncertain.

Governor Macaulay afterwards obtained from a chief, christened by the English King Tom, a district of fifteen miles from north to south, and four from east to west, terminating at False Cape. Not

* Anna Maria Falconbridge.

to trace the frequent changes of boundary, which took place almost annually, the charter in 1821 states the northern frontier to be the Sierra Leone, and that upon the south the river Caramanca. A most important accession was made by Governor Hamilton, who in 1824 obtained from the neighbouring chiefs the right over the navigation of the river, and added to his government the islands of Bance, Tasso, Tombo, and all others between Tagrim Point and Ka Keepa Creek, which still belong to the British, together with Ro Bump, and a few other positions useful for factories.

One more appendage to the Peninsula must not be omitted,—the delicious Banana Islands, which either were, or at least deserved to be, the true Hesperides of the poetic ancients.

There exists an analogy between colonies and caterpillars, less obvious perhaps than that which Maltebrun assumes between man and the hog, but not less true. Leaving each who reads to discover it, he

is to be informed that Sierra Leone is now in its second stage of improvement towards the gorgeous perfection of the butterfly; rather torpid, perhaps, but not on that account less like the chrysalis. A trading company at first held it, and managed, or mismanaged, its concerns at pleasure. Government then adopted the foundling, and still continues to show its paternal solicitude by a generosity of purse well and widely known. The extent of territory had been considerably augmented at one time by a celebrated governor, General Turner, who, from motives of humanity and policy, extended the colony by treaty with different chiefs as far as the Mungo or Little Scaries River on the north, and enlarged its southern limit to the division between the river Sherbro and the river Gallenas, noted for its slave traffic. His object was in accordance with the ostensible purpose of the colony, the suppression of slavery; and, if a private opinion may be offered, the means taken to further this

object were extremely judicious, and argued a knowledge essential to the good administration of local affairs,—that of the habits and dispositions of the neighbouring tribes; a knowledge fast disappearing before the stern determination of the surrounding potentates to exclude white men from their dominions. Had the proposed acquisitions of General Turner been approved at home, that recent insult to the British offered with impunity by a black chief, Dalla Mohammadoo, whose town is visible from the English Government-house, could not have occurred; and that market of slaves, filled with the once free inhabitants of Sierra Leone, and English subjects, had not existed. For it is notorious that a considerable traffic in slaves, by means of kidnapping, is carried on in Freetown itself, capital though it be of an English settlement for the very purpose of suppressing slavery. A Mandingo himself told me—and these Mandingos have the credit of being the slave merchants in chief—that Freetown,

the residence of all the officers of Government, is by far the most favourable place for buying or kidnapping men upon the whole coast. There are many reasons why the exact relations borne between Sierra Leone and the surrounding nations should be inadequately and incorrectly ascertained. The Government saw fit to disallow General Turner's addition of territory, and to forbid the ratification of the treaties. The Bulloms in consequence being their own masters, enjoying an impunity and independence which they once offered to resign, and holding the English in considerable derision, undo the good which has been done, by returning into slavery those who have been rescued from it by the British men-of-war. It is therefore a matter of regret in this point of view, if in this only, that a fair opportunity was permitted to pass of checking the exercise of this African impulse. At the period at which the decision was made, however, there is no doubt that circumstances warranted it.

Every writer who prates incidental geography owes an apology. Mine must be, that before I had again breathed English air,—and a difficult thing it is to do so for many days after return from the clear atmosphere of the South,—several humane gentlemen interested in the slave question had the effrontery to assure me that Sierra Leone was a town; others, that it was an island; and some, that it was a mere churchyard, where foolish people went of their own accord to bury themselves. To clear away error, which should be known only by name in this century of improvement, it has been distinctly shown that Sierra Leone is a peninsula of considerable size, and it will be shown that it contains many towns, many churchyards, and claims many islands. It may, moreover, be worth stating, that it is encompassed by numerous nations, of various names, fame, and colours, each of which contributes a unit to the very diversified population of the colony.

The country itself was originally ceded by the Timmanees, or Temanites,* for they use either appellation; a set of sturdy savages, warlike as bulls, cunning as serpents, intellectual as their neighbours, and as fair as animal ebony usually is. Grateful remembrance compels acknowledgment of their hospitality towards strangers, who restlessly leave the comforts of white society to plunge into the wild recesses of these forest towns. Should a Timmanee ever learn the gree-gree, or magic of reading, it is only equitable that he should herein find testimony borne to the decent treatment which a Pootah† received when in the midst of his people, and far from white men's abode and white men's influence.

The estuary, unwisely named the River, Sierra Leone borders the north of the colony, and its opposite bank is held by a cowardly and treacherous race called Bulloms, and is known as the Bullom

* See Job, chap. iv. *v.* 1.

† Timmanee, signifying a white man.

shore. This low wooded bank, and even the houses or huts of the principal town-residence of the usurper, are distinctly visible from Freetown, the distance across the estuary at this part not exceeding six or seven miles; and beautiful is its appearance through the amber atmosphere of those sun-bright regions, where all nature appears to be seen through a coloured glass: indeed, it requires an effort of imagination for a stranger to feel the reality, to people it with its own savage and heartless inhabitants; it is so soft, it is so tranquil, and yet so beaming.

The Bulloms are nearly the zero of the thermometer of African civilization, and although so close to Sierra Leone that the respective inhabitants might telegraph each other, it would not be so safe for the white resident of one bank to cross the river to visit his caoutchouc-skinned brothers upon the other as it is to pass the Thames at Rotherhithe; at least this was the case when last I saw its palm-trees waving their long leaves to the sea breeze.

To the east of both the Bullom shore and Sierra Leone spread in wide dominion the potent Timmanees aforesaid, who taught me the mystery of sleeping on mud-banks, and of eating rice and palm-oil with finger and thumb; who worship the devil fervently, and offer their wives to strangers. A worthy race are they, nevertheless, and a curious; and shall have a chapter to themselves.

The Bulloms of Sherbro, or the Sherbros, pronounced "Saybras," are to the south of the colony; and, as I possess some singular friends in that excellent nation also, they shall be spoken of advisedly. Strenuous advocates are they for the free-trade system—in slaves, and, being men of high principle, practise what they approve. The Caramancas increase and multiply to the south of these, for the benefit, it would seem, of the slave-merchant rather than for their own comfort. They are well known in the West India Islands as stout fellows. It needs not to speak of the autocracies beyond;

of the Feys and the Deys, the Kittims and the Bassas, who carve the backs of the women into patterns of filigree-work, and chop the faces of the men into the semblance of wire gauze. Of the Foulahs and Fellatahs, Mandingos, and Soosoos, Kroos and Ibbos, Akoos and Papaws, much might be said, and something shall be said. They are as the stars around the moon, unnumbered, and nearly innumerable; puzzles to physiologists, and joy to the kidnappers.

The situation of the British settlement is fortunate. This opinion is certainly liable to controversy, and cannot be thrust upon any against his will; but being the result of information and inquiry, it may be offered. It must be borne in mind that in colonizing this romantic spot two laudable ends were in view; the suppression of a sea trade in slaves, and, ultimately, the civilization of the Blacks. Liberia, sometimes carelessly contrasted with it, aims at the latter object alone, as the best means of attaining

the former; but, until the moral and social constitution of the negro undergoes a radical change, active war with the slave-merchant must be combined with the more pleasant process of humanising. The schoolmaster, however zealous, when sent abroad into Africa for this purpose, must go hand in hand with the Admiralty: the rod will effect little without the co-operation of a long-eighteen; ages must elapse before the immemorial customs of a people become obnoxious to themselves, especially when the change is brought about by strangers. In the meanwhile the population of kingdoms is passing away into slavery, or to that death which alone can rescue thousands from its fetters.

In casting the eye down the western coast of that vast continent, whose interesting and Malthusian characteristics are slavery, polygamy, and cannibalism,* it is impossible to restrain a throb of pleasure

* According to physiologists, three infallible preventive checks.

when from time to time the name of a European settlement breaks the long line of barbarism. Like its own green oases in the wastes of the desert, are the names of the French Goree, the British Gambia and Isles de Los; then Sierra Leone, the philanthropic mother of philanthropic offspring, the American colony of Liberia, and the Cape. When these centres of civilization are considered in connexion with what France may do in Algiers, and what Mohammed Ali has already done in Egypt, dreams may be pardoned which give a vivid picture of the future improvement and future greatness of a now degraded section of mankind.

There is no need for invidious comparison between Liberia and its coadjutor in the same laudable work. If rivalry exist, it should be that honest struggle to draw out principles to the utmost in practice, which yet owns the cause to be one and the same,—the amelioration and happiness of the human race. One circumstance is generally overlooked by such as find plea-

sure in contrasting, and by those who endeavour to exalt their own favourite by injudiciously dishonouring the other colony; and this is, that whilst the American settlement is decidedly far in the advance with regard to intellectual cultivation, producing literary proofs that it is so in journals well edited by negroes, and showing, that while salaried officers are not indispensable to good government, (its rulers and magistrates being chiefly blacks,) yet the population have not started in the first instance from utter and unrestrained savage life; which is the case with the bulk of the inhabitants of Sierra Leone. The black colonists of Liberia have not only learned the arts of civilized life, but in some measure have enjoyed opportunities of acquiring that moral, or immoral tone, which runs through white society. They have, previous to their emigration to Africa, resided either as servants upon estates or as free proprietors of land in the United States of America, and have therefore brought

with them into the country of their untutored forefathers a stock of civil and social knowledge, as well as an impulse to improvement.

It is not so in Sierra Leone. In a colony containing thirty thousand blacks, twenty-eight thousand at the least have first trodden the British ground in the complete nakedness of person, and crudeness of mind and heart, of the savage fresh from his native bush. Cargoes of men in this condition, captured by the British squadron, are yearly dispersed through the towns or located in villages in the Peninsula, not only ignorant of every art and every social relation, but without a common language. It is no ground of just offence, no stumbling-block to the warmest friend of the negro, that amongst these literature does not as yet flourish; it is no stain upon the Government that these are not yet admitted as members of the colonial council. If as yet the swarthy outcasts, who have fortunately found an asylum in the moun-

tain and valley of Sierra Leone, have learned no more than to prefer quiet cultivation of the earth, and security of person and property, to lawless plunder and perpetual danger, tranquillity to restlessness, clothing to nakedness; if their experience in commerce has been limited to the daily supply of the markets in Freetown, and the system of honestly giving and honestly receiving equivalents; if their ambition, now deadened to the glories of successful kidnapping, has no higher exercise than in striving, through frugality and patient industry, to acquire wealth sufficient to substitute a stone-built house with English furniture for the slovenly wattled hut of their native country; if, in short, the black colonists of Sierra Leone are behind their more cultivated and enterprising brothers of Liberia *magno intervallo,* enough has resulted to justify the most ardent hopes of the most benevolent, and to make every Englishman look with pride upon the settlement which his nation maintains for

so noble a purpose. It is not only vain, but foolish, to desire a sudden conversion from degradation to perfection; the transition from the habits of a savage to those of the man of refined mind must be gradual. A banana requires time to become ripe, and the over-luscious mango sweetens only by degrees. After all, the mass of improving savages in Sierra Leone presents tolerably honest members of society. Worse men might be found in London when the nights are dark.

CHAPTER III.

FREETOWN—THE CAPITAL.

Beautiful Situation. — Public Buildings. — The Church. — Its Metamorphoses. — Clock controversies. — Chapels. — "Lady Hunting Tom's Collection." — Fort Thornton. — Attack of the Timmanees. — Barracks. — Singular distribution of the Town.

The face of the Peninsula is studded with towns and villages. These do not in general boast a large population, and not many can claim the honour of a single white resident. The inhabitants are liberated slaves, who have been rescued from the slaver, and distributed through the various districts of Sierra Leone. The capital of the colony, however, is considerable both in extent and in numbers, and enjoys the privilege of being

the seat of commerce and of government. Here the white men, whether colonial officers or traders, take up their abode; the noble anchorage in front is covered with the men-of-war upon the station, and the merchant-ships which arrive from England for the purpose of being freighted with teak and camwood. The Mandingo and the Foulah gold-finders journey some hundred leagues to reach Freetown, and to cheat the white man into a hard bargain. The Kroos, those singular beings, voluntary slaves as they may be called, people its streets after their hazardous voyage along the coast in slight canoes. Serracoolets from the far interior find their way here, led by curiosity or the hope of traffic; the Timmanee, whose fathers ceded the territory to the English, occasionally revisits the birthplace of his ancestors. Here too, are found the quick, intelligent Maroon, and the haughty Settler. In fact, Freetown is distinguished from all the other towns by the circumstance of its being selected by

the voluntary colonists, both white and black; for, although all in Sierra Leone are nominally free, those who have been emancipated, or the involuntary colonists, have dwellings assigned them at the option of the Governor.

The capital stands immediately upon the shore of the estuary, at the distance of about five miles from Cape Sierra Leone. At this point the arm of the sea, which is fifteen miles in width between the Cape and Leopard's Island, narrows to six or seven. To the left, the shore is broken into a series of little bays, with moderate hills gently rising above, and waving with palm-trees; in front is the wide Sierra Leone, glittering in constant sunshine, and bordered by the low woods of the Bullom shore. The inland country, to the west, is intersected by the waters of the Port Logo, Rokel, and Bunce rivers, varied with many a green island, and bearing many a little canoe, formed of the trunk of a tree, and paddled by sturdy savages. The aspect of the country im-

mediately behind Freetown is bold and imposing; it is a succession of evergreen mountains soaring one above another.

No site for a town more lovely could have been selected, had charms to the eye been the sole guide. It is not possible that gloomy forebodings should thrust themselves forward when a stranger arrives, and for the first time looks upon the glowing bosom of the estuary, scarcely rippled by the light airs and gentle tides of these latitudes; the quiet Bullom shore, green to the water's edge; the bold sweep of that amphitheatre of undulating mountains which appear to be embracing the capital for its protection, gaping with enormous ravines and dark valleys, and clothed with never-fading forests. The town itself is picturesque. It rises from the water's edge, and gradually creeps up the sides of the surrounding hills, with its white dwellings and prolific gardens; whilst in the distance, emerging from high woods, appear the country mansions of white gentlemen, with patches of ground

devoted to the produce of coffee and fruits. The style in which the houses are generally built throws an Oriental character over the view; they are as often of wood as of stone, and are washed white or yellow; piazzas, with pillars at due intervals, support the verandahs, and secure a shady walk in the open air even during mid-day; the verandahs exhibit rows of jalousies, a kind of venetian blind painted green; and the roofs, principally formed of layers of thin dry wood called shingles, project to a great distance, with wide eaves. The greater number of dwellings stand in a court-yard or in a garden; causing the extent of space covered by buildings to be much greater than in a European town of equal population, and giving it, from the foliage of luxuriant trees, a healthy and fresh appearance. It is flanked on either side by a brook of clear water, which never fails in the most intense weather of the dry season. The channel of these streams may be easily traced by the abundant vegetation. The prolific bounty of Nature,

which makes the spot so beautiful and so exciting, and almost invests the busy streets with the charms of the country, is, however, one of the causes of that evil name which pestilence has fixed upon Sierra Leone. The public ways are no sooner watered by the first showers of the wet season than they appear to be converted into fields; the most frequented thoroughfares become nearly impassable from the dense herbage that rises beneath the feet, particularly the indigo, which is constantly cut down to allow the common movements of the inhabitants.

One advantage in the situation of Freetown, and that a valuable one, results from the whole width of the town from east to west being directly upon the ocean, and consequently open to the full benefit of the cool breezes which daily set in from the Atlantic. The houses face this quarter; and as the sun, during the whole of the hot or dry season, shines from the south, the European lives in

shade, and escapes the infliction of its intruding glare.

In the midst of the town three peculiarities are immediately noticed: the total absence of uniformity in costume; the dead silence which reigns in streets where no waggon, cart, or dray of any kind is employed; and the want of inns and hotels, no such accommodation existing when I visited it. White strangers are not induced to select Sierra Leone as a watering-place, or for a summer excursion. All Europeans, therefore, with the exception of naval men whose home floats with them, who arrive at the colony, seek it for some definite purpose and in connexion with established residents. If public officers, public residences are ready for them, destined for their reception; if mercantile, intending to settle permanently, letters of introduction easily procure a welcome and hospitality. An hotel was established a few years since—it was not wanted—and the speculation failed.

Of the amazing circuit occupied by the

buildings of the capital, a very limited portion is inhabited by Europeans,—that which immediately borders the sea. They are not arranged together, but often at long intervals; the intervening space being filled with clusters of the lowest huts or sheds of the lowest blacks. No taste, however, has developed itself so strongly as that which urges the savage to toil, in order to be enabled to build a house like that of the white man; and, where ample remuneration for labour is joined to a frugality approaching abstemiousness, the taste is often gratified. It requires a longer intercourse with the usages of polite society to reconcile the African to the burdensome luxury of clothing; and I well remember a man and wife, whose scanty apology for dress bespoke the ill-humour with which they had made any concession to the arbitrary demands of decency, glorying in the possession of a dwelling raised of stone which possessed not only door and window, but a second story. The comforts

of an European are invaded by the vicinity of these negro hovels; for as the negro is not only dignified with equal privileges of freedom with his white neighbour, but often entertains an ungrateful arrogance under the plea that the white man is but a casual intruder in the land of the African, little attention is paid to the domestic convenience of those whom he would call, with Addison, "the pale unripened beauties of the North."

The number of white residents throughout the peninsula of Sierra Leone bears no proportion to that of the blacks. It fluctuates but little; the majority being stated officers or clerks in the different colonial departments. In 1833, eighty-four only, including the ladies of such as had married white women, were to be reckoned in the entire colony. Of these seventy-three dwelt in Freetown, with, however, between ten and eleven thousand blacks, out of the thirty thousand under British authority in the settlement.

The dwellings of the Settlers and Maroons, the superior coloured inhabitants, are mingled with those of the Europeans, so that, although the thatched hut of the Jaloff, or the Congo, is occasionally seen thrust amongst the better houses, this portion of the capital is, comparatively speaking, both neat and well built; for the Settlers and Maroons, the one tribe in possession of actual wealth, and the other living in the recollection of property now passing from them, have imitated either the style adopted by their European neighbours or that to which they had been accustomed in their lost homes, Jamaica and America.

The arrangement of Freetown is remarkably uniform; it has evidently been prompted by considerations of convenience, cleanliness, and health. In a line with the shore, upon the first rise of forty or fifty feet in height, is a fine street continued through the whole extent of the town, from the market-place to the exercising ground behind Fort Falconbridge. At

right angles to this, and sloping upwards to the first swelling of the Barrack Hill, are several more, parallel to each other, inhabited by the principal Europeans, and graced with the chief public buildings. Rapid increase of a population constantly receiving the additions of several hundred at a time, the cargoes of captured slavers, and the grant of Crown lands, under the superintendence of the governor, assisted by a colonial surveyor, have permitted the developement of a plan striking and healthy. Each street is continued in one straight unbroken line as far as the ground will allow. All are at right angles to one and parallel to another, and, to a spectator placed upon an eminence in the vicinity, represent the bars and cross-bars of a gigantic gridiron. No lanes or alleys are permitted, and every way is at least sixty feet in width. This extreme openness, increased by the gardens which separate each house, expands the town to an extent greater than that which many an English city of much

larger population requires; and a ride entirely round it would pass over several miles. At the foot of the rocky heights which suddenly break upon the regularity of the streets, are long suburbs of huts, continuing along the Pademba road until stopped by the stream which flows at the root of the Leicester Mountain. The lofty and circular Barrack Hill is encompassed by these huts, the habitations of emancipated slaves, still in a lower stage of civilization than could be supposed possible so near the quarter of the whites, and within the range of their constant rides. These parts of Freetown, the most extensive and most populous, present a weary succession of hovels, formed of a few rough stakes plunged into the ground, wattled and plaistered with brown mud; some suburbs, as that of the Kroomen, consist of wicker sheds, five or six feet square, covered with dry leaves and boughs; others, of circular huts, with conical roofs. The papaw, plantain, and banana grounds attached, are repeated in unvaried succession.

In the European quarter, fronting the sea, are situated the principal public buildings; some of them prodigies of architectural effort in the opinion of the blacks, since they rise to the height of three stories. Government House is a large wooden box, supported upon a story of stonework, and presenting an appearance resembling a floor-cloth manufactory. The sole pomp which announces its dignity consists in a black soldier pacing beneath a rude piazza at the entrance, and a carriage-way, more ornamental than useful, guarded by two grim stone lions, the only animals of the name to be found in the Mountain of Lions.

The Commissariat is likewise a huge planked building, painted white in imitation of Government House, but of more massive and lofty pretensions. The military too, loitering in its precincts, in the pride of red coats and black countenances, are more numerous and equally haughty. Memory, happy in not a few reminiscences of hospitality connected

with these edifices, is fain to quote a veritable proverb—

Fronte nulla fides;

which, being interpreted, means to say, that excellent men and excellent dinners are sometimes found within coarse specimens of architecture.

But the Church stands foremost, if it yet stands at all, in importance and interest. It is hailed by the distant voyager as nearly the only Christian temple upon the coast; for I am given to understand that there is none at the British settlement on the Gambia. It is a sataka* to the savage Satan-worshiping Bullom; a stumbling-block to the contemptuous Mussulman; a sanctuary to the matrimonially-disposed cannibal; a rough ashlar to colonial masons; a hobby of successive governors; and an item in the national expenditure of 80,000*l.* It has been many years in progress; and, although several times finished, has constantly had portions taken down in order that the taste

* Devil-temple.

of different influential patrons of the arts might find indulgence. When I first saw it, the tower was endeavouring to rise under the languid efforts of many black masons; and when, upon finally quitting the colony to return to England, I bid a last farewell to the place where the more devotional of the European residents are wont to take their Sunday morning siestas, nearly three tiers of stonework had been added. The arches of the choir-windows had originally been Gothic, but a fastidious governor preferring the circular to the pointed, the walls were pulled in pieces to allow of the change. The first tower, being considered as too diminutive, was replaced after a series of years by one of more ponderous dimensions; this again, being deemed unnecessarily large, shared the fate of its predecessor; and the present bids fair to satirize its designers as severely as either of those now no more.

In former days, the market is stated to have been held within the shade of

the sanctuary, and its floor to have been covered with the half-naked women and piccaninies, who bought and vended; the rapid putrefaction of meat, which speedily renders the air around intolerable, must have dispersed any odour of sanctity that might have otherwise survived this indecent misappropriation. It is not difficult to understand with what feelings and opinions the grave Mahometan Foulahs and Mandingos, so tenacious of the sanctity of their own mosques, must have beheld this desecration.

An amusing, and not very serious controversy, has arisen with respect to the ultimate purpose of the new tower. The story, jocosely told me, is probably correct to some extent.

The capital possesses as yet no public clock for the admonition of its wide population. The inconvenience of this want is the greater, because, in consequence of the excessive humidity of the atmosphere, which corrodes the finest steel, watches soon become useless, and

the Foulah blacksmith — the goldsmith, jeweller, and whitesmith of Freetown — is not able to repair them. In one of the cellars of the Colonial Office, or in some equally secure custody, lies the machinery for a clock; long has it lain there, and long may it continue. The cause of its concealment and inactivity is simple: — Together with the works, four faces arrived from England, that dwellers in each point of the compass might meditate upon the flight of time. Now, no resident mechanist is sufficiently skilled in wheels and pinions to comprehend the mystery of connecting the movements which should rule a quadruple set of hands. Four dial-plates, it is true, may be made to ornament the respective walls of the metropolitan tower, but one only can be contrived to carry revolving fingers, and to one quarter only of Freetown can the lapse of life be accurately measured. Which shall be selected as the favoured quarter is therefore the difficulty; each puts in its plea, and argues thus: —

The right honourable the colonial chaplain urges, with show of reason, the high importance that the pastor should know when to seek his flock, and the melancholy state of those who wait for spiritual food whilst he, unconscious of the hour, cannot hasten to feed them; and moreover, the throbbing anxiety of sable pairs who cluster round the church-door, weary of wooing and impetuous to be wed, on Mondays and on Thursdays. Nor do these pleas lose their entire force although it should be conceded that the hungry, when offered their weekly supply of religious nourishment reject it when presented, and generally sleep their appetite away; and that Quashiba and Calliloo have already grown old in connubial happiness according to their native rites, and are prompted to covet a second marriage at the Christian altar, only in as much as custom warrants their wearing European clothes upon the occasion in the morning, and drinking themselves into intoxication in the afternoon.

Government House, in the second place, claims the privilege of the sight of the clock, should one be erected. If the honourable chaplain sees it, it must be invisible to the governor; and if any person in the colony should be punctual at divine service, the duty of good example surely rests with his Excellency and household. The officers too at the barracks, and not less the troops, and the army surgeon, an invaluable individual in this European's grave, dwell upon the same side.

But a third party must be heard. This embraces the gentlemen of the principal remaining departments of the state, the residents of the Commissariat, of the Colonial Office, of the Liberated Department; also the schools, and the thick populace of the King's yard, who would be defrauded of their share in the general advantage, should either the governor or the chaplain be gratified.

Lastly, east, south, and west having been respectively claimed, the north puts in its petition. It fronts, or did front,

the mansion of the chief justice, of the judge of the high court of mixed commission, and the Custom House ; and faces the vessels of war and of commerce in the river, which alone contain more white men than reside in the whole settlement; not to mention the impressive effect it might exert upon the wondering minds of an entire nation, the Bulloms upon the opposite bank, who have no other method of distinguishing the hours than by looking to the sky and pointing to the sun's place with their finger. *Adhuc sub judice lis est.*

Besides the church of the Establishment, are several chapels ; for the blacks, natively given to superstitious awe of spiritual beings, are converted in large numbers from their pagan errors. They are prone to religious belief, which, when unguided by truth, exfoliates into a thousand fantastic notions, but which willingly casts them aside and enters into the sublime mysteries of our faith.

The Maroons are not considered to cultivate religious tendencies with the

order and perseverance of the old Settlers, who represent the most favourable specimen of a black Christian community in the colony. Few Settlers or Maroons attend the church, but they possess places of worship varying as much in style and size as in sect. Settler Chapel, so called, is a highly respectable conventicle, where black preachers of education inculcate Calvinist tenets to dense and steaming congregations. Wesleyan Methodists abound, especially amongst such of the Maroons as profess any creed. Baptists, whose peculiar ceremony, so fearful in our cold climate, would be a luxury at Sierra Leone, are not numerous; but in place of this, a sect well known to us, they have professors of doctrine classing themselves under a name peculiar to themselves.

"You go for hear preach-palaver this time?" said I to a settler woman, one fine summer morning, as she tripped along with the air of a queen; her best earrings gleaming in the sun, her naked feet

trampling the burning dust with solemn measured step, her white pocket-handkerchief and Bible intimating her serious purpose ; " you go for hear preach-palaver this time ?"

" Me can go for hear God-palaver."

" You go for hear the chaplain make God-palaver ?"

" Me no go for hear chaplain."

" What are you—an Independent ?

" What matter for then you tink me for Independent ?" said she contemptuously.

" Do you attend Jehovah Shallum ?"

" Me no love Jehovah Shallum—me no Wesleyan—no Moravian—no Church—no Independent—no Maroon—pish !"

" What sect do you prefer then ?"

" Sex ! me no sex—am Lady Hunting Tom's collection—of course." *

Grass houses, mere sheds, receive many congregations of worshippers, in the extreme suburbs. They are certainly pub-

* Lady Huntingdon's connexion.

lic buildings, although not more conspicuous than a fragile cow-house in a rural district.

The Mahometans have not as yet raised a mosque; but its embryo, sufficient for the purposes of prayer, exists in Foulah-town. The devil-temples, universal on this part of the coast, and the only sacred erection of many tribes, do not sanctify the termites' nests of the Freetown district, nor dare presume to introduce themselves in the picture of the Anglo-negro metropolis.

Frowning upon the bosom of the Barrack Hill is Fort Thornton, built after the return of the whites from their heroic concealment in the bush, upon an attack made by the French some years ago. It commands the town and harbour, and every thing else—excepting awe. The structure, although well built and massive, is beginning to crumble away, from want of due repairs. A few small pieces of artillery lie upon the walls, dismounted

and rusty, and the sole garrison consists of an old ewe goat, and some Guinea fowl.

Upon the sward, however, in front, are five or six guns of small calibre, used to alarm the savages around upon his Majesty's birth-day, and to return salutes from the shipping: this process is highly ludicrous. A French frigate chanced to anchor before Freetown for repairs. Intention to do honour to the British flag was announced by an officer, who put ashore to ascertain whether any British flag would be hoisted in the town, and whether the salute would be duly returned. The next morning, a small jack appeared upon a pole at Fort Thornton; a much handsomer one instantly rose to the mast-head of the Frenchman, and the shores rebound the thunder of her artillery.

At the first discharge, the negroes of the town were thrown into consternation; they rushed together from all quarters; the market was instantly forsaken; goods,

chattels, fruit and umbrellas, were abandoned; crowds gathered like sheep in a panic; and, before the twenty-one had ceased, a hundred surmises were rife amongst them, the least of which was devastation and death. The roar died away; thrilling suspense for a moment domineered over the terrified black citizens, a large body of whom had gathered together at the foot of the wide street in front of Fort Thornton. Their alarm was soon re-awakened by a fire above their heads; and, as the repeated shots blazed from the turf before them, they imagined destruction from either French or English inevitable; women hid themselves, and children screamed; the bulls and swine and *poco curante* goats alone pursued their wanderings undismayed.

The warlike Timmanees, however, once had the daring, on invading the colony, to march up to the fort itself; and, though repeatedly repulsed, repeatedly renewed their attack, charging even to the mouths of the guns; and if they were finally com-

pelled to abandon their siege, it was from the carnage that had weakened their forces, and the inability of undisciplined savages to make a lodgment—not from awe of the black bulwarks.

The soldiers, all of whom are negroes, even to the sergeant-major, dwell in barracks nearly a mile from the town, whose long rows of suburban huts encircle the base of the Barrack Hill. The building is nobly situated, being constantly open to every current of air, and above the reach of fogs which sometimes hang over these low grounds. The temperature of the atmosphere at the barracks is generally two degrees under that of the town beneath, making a residence in them comfortable as well as wholesome. Deaths now rarely take place amongst its inmates.

From this spot the prospect is inspiring. Far down beneath the feet, diminished into a miniature, sleeps the quiet town, extending in front its open streets of white and verandahed houses, with their

gardens of fruit-trees, to the water's edge; on either side are the clustered strings of brown huts in the suburbs of the natives, resembling lines of small ant-hills, and occasionally graced with a red or white rag attached to a pole, an offering to the devil, and probably quite as efficacious in tempering his mood, and of gently repelling the visits of his familiars, as the horse-shoe of our own civilized farm-houses.

Beyond the wide waters of the estuary is the woody outline of shore of the savage. Cape Sierra Leone exalts itself to the left; to the right, on an arm of Leicester mountain, the race-course, the glittering rivers, with their islands, and the land of the Timmanees; whilst behind, the mountain masses, waving with evergreen forests, terminate in the bold cone of the sugar-loaf.

The remaining public buildings are more worthy on account of their adaptation to the purposes for which they were destined, than from external design. Wood is a material too largely

employed to permit the developement of much taste; and, unfortunately for the aspiring negro Nashes and Wyattvilles, Gothic, Grecian, Saxon, and Saracenic structures are equally unknown. The chief exceptions to frame buildings are the market and gaol, or court-house, which are constructed in ponderous strength, of a dark ferruginous stone, easily worked.

The shops of Regent-street would blush could they see their fellows of Sierra Leone. A large room is set apart for retail business by the wholesale merchant; who sells every article, from tons of ivory and teak, gold-dust and camwood, to a single needle or a wafer, a nail of tape or yard of thread. The room is called a store, and of such stores a dozen may be found in the metropolis. One will represent all. As the small contributions of many exceed a large payment from one, the store-keeper wisely and warily seeks the custom of the blacks, who are as the sand, rather than the whites, who are as the Phœnix. The store exhibits strings

upon strings of beads, of blue, white, and amber glass, certain lures to the gentle sex; a less copious, but more expensive show of coral bands and necklaces entice the lover to extravagance, that he may woo his coy mistress with the costly and never-to-be-refused present, to deck her slender waist. The next potent temptation is a goodly collection of bottles, containing rum and Hodgson's ale, at which even the abstemious Mussulman casts a longing eye, but which he may not purchase, unless under the shallow pretence of medicine for a sick wife. Umbrellas, incentives to marriage, from the splendour which they throw upon that august ceremony, are suspended in rows. Palm oil, red and odoriferous, the favourite sauce for rice; yams and soap, iron pots, scissors and knives, blue cotton handkerchiefs, hats and cheeses, tobacco and teacups, are the most prominent articles in a Freetown shop. I was once honoured by a commission to enter a store, and purchase a watch-glass for a European lady.

After vain inquiries at several, Fortune favoured me, as a swarthy store-keeper declared that he possessed a considerable assortment: so few applications had been made for them, that some time elapsed before they could be discovered, hidden behind porter-bottles, frying-pans, straw-hats, and similar anomalies. None would fit the small watch; whereupon the shop-keeper, selecting two of the least, observed, "Sir, you may consider yourself fortunate in obtaining a watch-glass in Freetown; I alone in the whole colony keep them; I have chosen two, which I doubt not you may contrive to grind down with a stone, and you may not break both. I shall only charge five shillings for them; if both are broken, I will look for the smallest of those which remain." They were not worth a tenth part of the price demanded, even allowing the merchant a profit of a hundred per cent., being the commonest article manufactured; no others, however, were to be procured within three thousand miles.

The stores profess to comprehend within the catalogue of their contents, haberdashery, linen, and silk, with what veracity will be seen. Upon reviving the masonic lodge, a past-master needed a blue ribbon for the binding of his apron. None was to be obtained of any quality or width whatever. A pattern had been sent the round of the mercers' shops, colour alone being the *sine qua non:* at length a store-keeper, zealous of showing his peculiar resources, or of gratifying the gentleman, who held one of the highest offices in the colony, despatched a special messenger with the result of a long and anxious search. It was about fifteen inches of faded ribbon, which had once been green, but had become freckled and worn with age; an enormous sum was demanded.

In the wide streets of Freetown, one sight only bears an English stamp—the rum-shops, corresponding in comparative number, in attraction, and in custom with the gin-temples of London. The stranger

may stroll day after day without discovering any similarity between the metropolis of this colony and that of the mother-country other than this the most repulsive and degrading. He may yield to the flights of an imagination excited by perpetual novelty, by the glowing climate, the luxuriant vegetation of the Tropics, the never-ending variety of race and costume, manners and customs of wild tribes of men, whose ignorance of what is right leads him to look leniently upon their errors; but the pleasurable is succeeded by regret, when he beholds the throng of rum-drinkers choking the entrance of the spirit-shop. Where moral discernment and social decency are naturally dormant, it might be well to check facilities for acquiring brutalising habits. In countries where the mass of the lower orders are at all advanced, the indulgence of a taste for spirituous liquors conduces to poverty, a loss of station, and privation of the necessaries of life; upon those who have never risen from the blank of savage

existence, it has a more pernicious effect. Disturbances have arisen in Liberia from the authorities checking the use of ardent spirits, because there is no sense of degradation, no consciousness of debasement. The Ibbo, who arrives at Sierra Leone a creature of sensual impulses, when presented with a new animal gratification, naturally grasps at it with avidity. He can sustain no fall in the eyes of his fellows. The patch of yam and plantain ground attached to his hovel generously supports him without requiring labour during the chief portion of the year; and, should he refuse to toil himself, his wife, the black man's slave, toils for him. The conduct of sailors who are occasionally allowed to come ashore from the European vessels, throws a species of patronage over the exhibition of drunkenness; and many a dull negro is proud of sitting down by the side of the white man and quaffing with him, patiently enduring the contemptuous treatment of the British seaman as long as he may partake of

his rum. I was once particularly struck with the dignified contempt with which a Mandingo Mahometan regarded the mate of a merchantman who was reeling towards the wharf through the principal street, bent double, and roaring incoherent sentences; a Krooman and a Jaloff were assisting him on either side, and grinning with amusement at the abuse which he heaped upon them for daring to take hold of a white man, although unable to stand without their support.

There is a singularity in Freetown, perhaps peculiar to itself. It has been compared to Constantinople, Smyrna, Malta, and Alexandria, by those who have visited the Levant, in respect to the variety and contrast in the costumes and nations of its inhabitants. The African town probably exceeds either of these cities in the number of its tribes, certainly in difference of dress. But the distribution of the quarters of Freetown is unique; it

being an aggregate of several districts, named from the inhabitants of each respectively, but not distinguished by any obvious line of demarcation, parts of the same street being sometimes in different districts. The Christian quarter of Constantinople, and the Jewish sections in English towns in olden times, demonstrate a feeling of exclusion not operating in the divisions of Freetown, where the rights of all are equal.

The Settlers, free blacks, and voluntary emigrants from America, are a community associating little with the other inhabitants, and reside in that quarter of the metropolis called Settler-town. Next to them, on the east, are the abodes of the Mahometan tribes, Foulahs and Mandingos, known as Foulah-town. Maroon-town, in which Maroons principally reside, spreads to the west of Government House; then Jaloff-town, and Soldier-town, beneath the barracks. The cluster of wicker huts built by the Kroos is

called Kroo-town; and Congo-town stands upon the eminence, peopled by natives of Congo.

Representatives of between twenty and thirty distinct nations, of perfectly different language and costume, form the population of Freetown, few of whom have as yet given up their native dress and habits. The colony has not been sufficiently long established to amalgamate the many and jarring elements. The English official appears abroad with rigid and unbending adherence to hereditary and national tastes, conceding as little as possible to the change of climate and society. The Mahometan, imperturbable in self-satisfaction, makes no approach to European customs, and parades in solemn haughtiness past his theoretical Christian and practical pagan neighbour. The Settler, with American tone and remembrance of former importance, cannot be mistaken; the European garb and African countenance are sufficient tests. The clever Maroon shows features so marked

as to attract the notice even of those who are not aware that Carib and Spanish blood flows in his veins. The inhabitant of the Kroo coast, a well-knit muscular fellow, who refuses to be burdened with more weighty clothing than a white or striped pocket-handkerchief lightly bound around his loins, displays his nationality by the tattooed skin and black-burnt line upon his face, and his awe of Satan by the charm or talisman tied to his waist and ankle. These five classes reside in Freetown from choice; and, although the whole of the population of the Peninsula are equally free in the cognizance of the law, these alone, with the exception of casual visitors, have sought the colony of their own free will.

The remainder are either slaves liberated from the slaver at sea, or their descendants, and bear appellations sufficient to form a copious catalogue. Amongst them are to be found men from every slave tribe, to describe whom would be to write a dissertation upon many kingdoms.

They are chiefly brought from the rivers to the south of Sierra Leone, from the Caramanca to the Bights, and for the most part differ from the Maroons, Settlers, and Foulahs, in more crisp and woolly hair, a more flat and cartilaginous nose and receding forehead, projecting heel, and a countenance either dull from intellectual void, or ferocious from uncontrolled passion. The Ibbos, Akoos, Papaws, Caramancas, Calabars, Bassas, and Bonny tribes, are perhaps the most numerous, varying more in the character than in the degree of their barbarism. Of these, fresh contingents are annually added to the free subjects in the settlement, according as the British cruisers are successful in capturing vessels freighted with human cargoes.

CHAPTER IV.

VOLUNTARY COLONISTS—*Christians.*

THE SETTLERS.

First Nucleus of Black Population.—Old Man's Narrative.—American War.—Loyalty and Losses.—Nova Scotia.—Offer of Mr. Clarkson.—Arrival at Sierra Leone.—Disappointments and Sufferings.—Agricultural Advancement.—Disaffection.—Present Degeneracy, and Causes.

THE colonists must be divided into two great classes, the voluntary and involuntary; the first of whom are subdivided by the natural complexion, being either blacks of African descent, or whites. The former bear an overwhelming proportion to the latter, and moreover, with the exception of the Kroos, must be regarded as permanent residents, whilst the European is migratory. In sketching, there-

fore, an outline of the Freetown society, precedence is due to the more important negroes.

In a district where the European is but an intruder, although a useful one, and where the principle of equality between possessors of any skins, whether absorbing or repelling the rays of light, is acknowledged; where, too, the black man does not scruple to assert a right of dominion, innate, although at present in abeyance, prejudices in favour of mere colour must be suppressed. The motto adopted for the colony should be

"Nimium ne crede colori."

The "Settlers," a name arrogated by themselves *par excellence*, and quietly conceded by those who see more advantage in present prosperity than in remembrance of renown long passed away, may not wear the grasshopper of aboriginal import, but were the earliest community which sought Sierra Leone in a body. Of the four superior and distinct classes, they live upon a past reputation, being at present

in a state of rapid decay, and contributing less to the well-being of the state and their own comfort than the Maroons, the Foulahs, or the Kroomen.

The history of this people is interesting, painfully so if their own account may be believed; and it does not appear to differ, excepting in fulness of detail, from the published statement of the commissioners who were instructed to report upon the society and general state of Sierra Leone. The new and additional facts given me by themselves explain, rather than oppose, the statement of the official summary.

The Settlers were free blacks, proprietors of cultivated land in the southern states of America previous to the war which released the United States from allegiance to the mother-country. These people remained loyal throughout the contest, and at its conclusion had lost their all by fines and plunder. The English government, as a compensation, assigned them residence and lands in Nova

Scotia; but the climate proved injurious to the natives of the south, and the seasons baffled an agricultural experience gained in the hot latitudes of Carolina and Virginia. A mercantile company, which had purchased a belt of coast upon the north shore of Sierra Leone, with the double object of commerce and amelioration of the negro race, under the auspices of Granville Sharpe, Wilberforce, and other philanthropists, made offers to the uncomfortable Nova Scotian negroes, of conveyance across the Atlantic to the country of their forefathers; and an assignment of lands, free of impost, in a climate congenial to their constitution, and adapted to the same produce as that of their forfeited estates. The free grant promised consisted of twenty acres for each man, ten for his wife, and five for each child. Tempted by the many inducements held out by this change of situation, upwards of eleven hundred embarked under the auspices of the admirable Clarkson, through whom the proposition had been

made on the part of the company, and by whom the fulfilment of the stipulation was guaranteed.

The hopes of the company were raised by the good characters borne by the Settlers, and by their knowledge of agriculture. Many had received some education; cotton, coffee, and tobacco had been cultivated by them; and the soil of Sierra Leone was rich, fertile, and varied.

These hopes have fallen. Who now regards this once respectable community, the staple of the colony, with other feelings than pity, and how many upon the spot itself deny them even this? I took an interest in this unhappy people; no sufficient cause was publicly assigned for their degeneracy. At the house of a respectable old man, one of the original Settlers, with several of the best and oldest around, sufficient cause was shown. Whether the tale was correct in all its particulars; whether memory, grieving in the sad difference between the present and past, and soured by years of disappoint-

ment, represented the history of calamities in harsher outlines than an unbiassed witness would have drawn, is a matter necessary to be weighed. The story was a melancholy one; it came from the lips of a faded old man, and was corroborated by a circle of listeners. Whether correct or imaginative, the narrative is believed by themselves, and will fairly represent the manner in which they brood over their lot darkly and unprofitably. The substance and much of the wording are given as spoken.

"When the American war of independence broke out," said the old Settler, "I held a farm of three hundred acres in one of the southern states: my cotton and coffee plantations succeeded well; I was comparatively rich, and thriving prosperously. The Americans, then called rebels, called upon me, as a free proprietor, to join them in the cause of freedom; but I would not; my fidelity remained firm to my King. A fine, or contribution of a hundred pounds was, however, levied

upon me, and shortly afterwards I was compelled to pay a hundred pounds in addition. Nevertheless I was determined to continue loyal. Party feeling ran high; every man who did not assist one party was supposed to favour the other. At last, a further contribution of three hundred pounds was demanded; this sum was raised with difficulty: yes," cried the old man, with an energy amusing enough when it is considered that this contest had ceased for above half a century,—"I had five hundred pounds taken from me because I would not be a traitor to the King. Eight days afterwards I was riding in the road by my farm, out of spirits, when a company belonging to an Irish regiment of the King's troops came up; they seized me, called me disaffected, ill-treated me, took my horse from me, and, marching to head-quarters, drafted me as a private into one of the regiments. From that hour I lost sight of my property. During the war, I served to the satisfaction of my officers, and gained the

rank of serjeant; at its conclusion, offers of grants of land in Nova Scotia were made to all of us who were in similar circumstances. I obtained one of fifty acres, uncultivated of course, in place of my good and productive farm of three hundred acres. The nature of the climate rendered the soil altogether unsuited to the crops which I understood, and to which I had been accustomed, such as coffee, tobacco, and cotton; and length of time elapsed before the ground would repay the labour bestowed upon it. When the good Mr. Clarkson, in the name of the Sierra Leone Company, made overtures to our people to abandon Nova Scotia for the warmer shores of Africa, thirty acres were promised each man and his wife, and five for each child. We considered this small lot of ground worth acceptance, being persuaded of its productiveness, and adaptation to the cultivation of such produce as we had been accustomed to raise. We rejoiced at the thought of returning to the warm and fruitful land of our race, able to draw from its inex-

haustible resources the treasures of which our negro brothers who dwelt there were so ignorant; and we felt a pride in considering that we were blacks about to revisit the country of savages, with some small stock of education, and that we might lead others to improvement. Eleven hundred and thirty-one arrived here in the year 1792. It was in the rainy season, when the water fell incessantly, covering the earth like a deluge for between four and five months. We were landed: no houses at that time were ready for our reception; the ground had not even been cleared; all was impenetrable bush; not only was there a want of clothing and provision, but no means existed of procuring either. Many had been swept off by malignant fever; the spirits of the survivors were only sustained by the influence which the kind and gentle disposition of Mr. Clarkson and his superior mind had acquired over them, and the warm attachment and confidence with which all of us repaid his goodness; in fact, every one trusted him. This was a fatal year;

at one period six or seven died daily, and upwards of seven hundred were oppressed by fever at once, whilst without shelter and without proper food. We desired our promised grants of land; here we experienced a second disappointment; little had been guaranteed to us, but of this little all was refused excepting one fifth. Instead of thirty-five acres of good land, I obtained a grant of seven for myself, my wife, and child, and even this was entirely wild bush. My case was that of all; all fared alike; the excuse being, that in promising a larger gift, the company had overrated the extent of their territory, and that Mr. Clarkson had not been authorised to raise our expectations as he had done.* Many were disgusted,

* "Mr. Clarkson is the only man calculated to govern the people who came with him; for, by his winning manners, and mild, benign treatment, he has so gained their affections and attachment, that he can, by lifting up his finger, as he expresses it, do what he pleases with them." *Falconbridge's Two Voyages to Sierra Leone*, p. 139. When the settlers made remonstrance, and quoted Mr. Clarkson's

and many went from the colony to the neighbouring tribes of natives; rather preferring to dwell with the savage, than to submit to so flagrant a breach of engagement. For my part, my wife and child depended upon my exertions; and, in spite of every obstacle, I succeeded in clearing the bush, and for seven years laboured to bring my little farm to perfection. These grants, such as they were, had been promised free of all charge, as we surrendered property in Nova Scotia, of large extent, to receive them. What, then, was our surprise when, after having suffered so much, and toiled for years to gain a scanty livelihood from our little plots of farmland, and had made them worth something, the government called in our original grants, alleging them to be imperfect, and issued others, inserting a clause which made them liable to an annual

promise, they were told "that it was not uncommon for Mr. Clarkson to make prodigal and extraordinary promises," that "it was more than probable he was drunk when he made them."—*Idem*, p. 206.

quit-rent! This treatment caused much debate, and debate led to great excitement; the Settlers had always borne a good name for sobriety and hónesty, and had not deserved this injustice. I had given up three hundred acres, which my father had possessed before me, in the service of the King, and obtained fifty for them in Nova Scotia. I had again surrendered these on condition of receiving a grant of thirty-five in Sierra Leone free of tax, and with difficulty obtained seven of wilderness; and, now that it began to be productive, an annual charge was fixed upon it.

"Our people were at that time well regulated amongst themselves, under the sanction of the governor. Throughout our part of Freetown, named from us Settler-town, persons were selected to act as inferior magistrates or constables, to be answerable for our general good conduct, as well as to watch over our comfort. Tenth-men guarded the interests and controlled the behaviour of ten neighbouring families, and hundred-men were

appointed to superintend hundreds. In furtherance of these objects, they were accustomed to meet together in general consultations. When the threatened land-tax was announced, they assembled to consider whether it were best to accept these renewed grants and pay the impost, or to abide by the original agreement. Whilst so occupied, a party of soldiers marched to the spot, forced an entrance into the assembly, and fired upon them. Indignation became vehement: the party which refused to deliver up their grants rapidly increased; the flame spread; and a large body of the Settlers, embracing the bulk of our young men, crossed the brook where Foulah-town now stands, and, having taken this position, commenced discussion as to the best steps to be followed,—whether to leave the colony, to which they had freely come, or whether to try the effect of urgent remonstrance.

At this juncture the Maroons arrived at Sierra Leone. Fresh from the sanguinary war which they had long main-

tained in their mountain fastnesses in Jamaica against the British disciplined forces, the Maroons had no sooner landed here than arms were put into their hands, and they were commissioned to use them in reducing the Settlers to obedience. This commission our new fellow-colonists obeyed with alacrity. The Settlers yielded; the old men and women returned to Freetown, and for the most part abandoned their grants altogether; whilst many of our young men entered as sailors for distant countries, crossed over to the Bullom shore, or wandered amongst different surrounding nations. Few remained with us. Some were banished to the territory of the Bulloms; amongst the rest, with his father, Prince Stober, one of the most enlightened blacks in Freetown, perhaps in the world, and now so esteemed and respected as to receive invitations to the table of his Excellency at Government House.

"The Settlers were completely disheartened. They had no spirit to pursue

their improvements; few of our young men continued in the colony, and even these ceased to take interest in agricultural employment. The farms, no longer cultivated, returned to their present state of wild bush; for the older men were losing their bodily strength and stimulus to exertion, and no longer enjoyed the assistance of their sons. The few amongst us who still held our grants, and struggled on to maintain ourselves upon them, saw our labours frustrated by the thievish propensities of liberated slaves, who, becoming numerous, and being located immediately near us, plundered the farms without scruple or check. Once," said the old man, in ending his story, "we were considered the hope of the colony; what are we now! Those who originally knew us are dead or are away. There are none to speak for us. Our numbers are diminishing. In a few years not one of our race will remain, and our very name will be forgotten."

The Settlers are at present almost limit-

ed to old people and their grand-daughters. The foregoing history will account for this curious statistical fact. Young men are to be found amongst them, but in small proportion; and intermarriage of Settlers is rare, livelihood being precarious, and their general condition decayed. The elder generation chiefly depend for support upon their grandchildren, who are the laundresses of the colony.

The interior and the furniture of the house of an old Settler, which I sometimes entered for the sake of a palaver, were European; maps and drawings appeared upon the walls, and the table was covered with books of standard repute and ancient date, together with sundry pamphlets and religious works. The grey-haired patriarch had none of the uncouth attributes which generally belong to the negro; but his demeanour was quiet and polite, and his language on the whole correct. The favourite topic of his conversation was the luckless fate of his people; and the tone of feeling seemed

to partake of more sorrow than bitterness. His grand-daughters Hagar Achem, and her sister, Sarah Wilson, an acknowledged black belle, of formidable aspect, washed for his benefit. His aristocracy betrays itself in gout; their humility and filial tenderness lead them to the brook.

Eli mentioned the cause of his having abandoned his fields. Persevering even after the quit-rent commotion, he obtained prizes for coffee and sugar. He planted cinnamon and sowed rice; but in vain. The liberated slaves, or "Captives," as they are sarcastically termed by the Settlers, being let loose upon the province, despoiled his land of its crops whenever his absence permitted. His dwelling was in the town, and his farm lay at some distance, so that they were favoured by frequent opportunities. The Settlers had fallen into ill odour at Government House; they had forfeited approbation and encouragement, and their complaints found little sympathy; the sole redress they could obtain was re-

peated advice to be more watchful. The Captives grew daring from impunity, and in one night cut down five young cinnamon-trees of his planting, for firewood or the construction of their huts. They even hid themselves in the daytime in order to note the furrows in which he sowed his grain, that in the evening their hands might scrape it up together with the soil, to be separated at leisure. This state of things could not last, and he ceased to cultivate. His sons fell into unlucky circumstances, and he lost them both: report assigns them a melancholy end, the consequence of having been tempted to gain money by kidnapping, a practice which even the women Settlers have openly defended to my face, as the best and surest means of obtaining livelihood, largely practised by the Captives, those favourites of government.

"We are becoming poorer and more despised every day," observed a young Settler to me, tossing her head in scorn, "and those Captives are the great people

now. We are asked why we allow the Captives to pass us by. How can we avoid it? They sell each other at the Bullom shore, and of course become rich. We are honest, and do not steal people, and are told that we are idle. We are blamed because we do not thrive as the Captives do. If we were to make slaves, we should be as well off as they are; and we should do so, but we should be hanged." The last sentence was spoken with nervous fervour: family recollections made allusion to the punishment of death for slave-dealing rather painful.

The Settlers are rapidly decreasing. In the year 1792 Clarkson brought from Nova Scotia to Sierra Leone eleven hundred and thirty-one: in 1826 about one half had disappeared; in 1834 only three hundred survived, including such as had been born during forty-two years: a melancholy falling off, which warrants the opinion of their approaching extinction as a class.

I questioned that intelligent and re-

spectable man, Prince Stober, as to the probable cause of decay amongst the Settlers. Many reasons were assigned; the departure of the young men in former times of dispute with the government, and "the desire of such as continue in Freetown to imitate the white man, who seldom marries." Pride, however, has been their worst enemy; resting upon the remembrance of what they once were, and displaying itself in contempt for the Maroons and Liberated, now in almost all respects their equals. Originally landholders, if they labour for subsistence, it must be in competition with those whom they disdain as their inferiors, and by associating with them. This they will not generally do. They feel another disadvantage: being accustomed to civilized modes of living, to the comforts of home, the use of clothing, and to many luxuries which habit has rendered indispensable, as meat and bread, tea and coffee, they cannot be satisfied with a remuneration which would be ample

wages to a Captive; who needs but a meal of rice and palm-oil, a little cassada, or a few plantains and cocoas, and, excepting upon his wedding-day, bestows no more of his earnings upon dress than will purchase a cotton for the loins or a pair of loose trousers.

The Liberated, or Captives, even when they have risen to comparatively high stations in the colony, enjoying incomes of a hundred pounds per annum, seldom alter their pristine diet, and often maintain themselves on twopence a-day. They can therefore afford their labour at less cost than the Settler, and defy competition.

It is lamentable to witness the decay of a respectable community,* and one which proved itself well disposed and faithful to the English at a moment when their hostility might have produced evil consequences. This was during the ferocious invasion of the colony by the Timmanee warriors, on which occasion the

* "They are a religious, temperate, good set of people."—*Two Voyages, &c.* p. 139.

Settlers, to a man, aided the British in repelling the savage tribes.

Some years since, the Settlers had brought into cultivation considerable portions of those mountain sides and valleys which stretch from Freetown to Regent's, a distance of six miles. Coffee flourished abundantly; one variety, superior to the Mocha in aromatic flavour and richness, throve so well that a sample was sent to England, where it obtained a higher price than the finest Turkey in the market. Two sugar-mills were supplied with produce grown in the colony; cotton-growing commenced under favourable promise. Spices, cinnamon, pepper, and ginger were introduced. When I saw Sierra Leone, every trace of systematic improvement had disappeared beneath the over-luxuriant shooting of forest trees, festooned with gorgeous drapery of wild passion flowers and countless creepers of every splendid hue. The bush-paths were narrow, and overspread with the riotous growth of wanton herbage; the bush

itself was peopled, as of old, with boa constrictors, baboons, and leopards; and if the golden and black pine-apple at first surprised me by its endless profusion, it was not because the hand of man had planted it, but because Nature, here all-generous, has made it a rank and common weed. The sole exceptions to wilderness of forest and bush are the small grounds belonging to each liberated hut, and one or two attempts at English gardens out of town, which serve to afford amusement to such European residents as take pleasure in devoting time and money to raise a juiceless turnip or withered cabbage in a tropical settlement. A few acres of coffee remain; but even coffee is now imported from England, as well as spices, tobacco, sugar, and indeed all that the generous soil is eager to produce.

CHAPTER V.

VOLUNTARY COLONISTS.—*Christians.*

THE MAROONS.

Their origin.—Independence acknowledged by the Spanish and English in Jamaica.—The Maroon war.—Removal to Nova Scotia.—Exportation to Sierra Leone.—Rencontre with the Settlers.—Polygamy.—Danger of preaching against Sin.—Want of Jealousy.—Maroon Chiefs.—Character of the Maroons.—Costume.—Neglect of Agriculture.

ADJOINING Settler-town, to the west, are the streets originally occupied by the Maroons, and named Maroon-town. These two sections of the capital are interspersed with the principal public buildings, and contain the residences of the Europeans; and the general character of the houses, regular in their design and spacious stamp them at once as forming the civilized quarter.

The name of Maroon is not satisfactorily ascertained; no one of the tribe could give any information on the subject; in their own language it conveyed no meaning. It was in all probability fixed upon them by the Spaniards, and is supposed by some writers to be the corruption of a Spanish word denoting a marauder or plunderer; by others, a mispronunciation of a term suggested by their similarity in complexion and paganism to the Moors. Their origin in Jamaica sprang from an intermixture of several white and black races, when, during the early connexion of the Spaniards with that island, runaway slaves found no difficulty in securing a lawless liberty in the impenetrable forests. These slaves were principally of the Coromantin nation, one celebrated for fine muscular form; but old nationality was destroyed, and a new one generated, by a mixture of Spanish, and, it is most probable, of Caribb blood, with the negro. The Maroon, therefore, is by descent European, Ame-

rican, and African; a strange combination of opposing elements. Had the race sprung up destitute of the vices of each ancestry, and wealthy in their excellence only, it would have stood alone a pattern to mankind; but the vices and virtues are always so inseparably joined in the human heart, that they seem friends instead of enemies.

Whilst the Spaniards possessed Jamaica, the independence of the Maroons was acknowledged; and the English, on capturing the island, confirmed their privileges. In the mountain regions of the interior they held several towns under their own government, and enjoyed the exercise of all internal policy connected with the regulation of their tribe. Alleged infringement of their rights, on the occasion of a Maroon, who had committed theft in an English town, being flogged at the hands of a common slave, roused the vengeance of that particular Maroon community to which the culprit belonged; and when redress could

not be obtained for the insult which they declared gratuitous, since summary punishment would have been inflicted on the offender according to their own laws, or even flogging by a freeman would have been forgiven because deserved, retaliation ensued. The horrors of the Maroon war were at length closed by a capitulation. The inhabitants of the revolted district, together with the chiefs under whose conduct the guerilla warfare had been so calamitous to the white troops, were sent to Nova Scotia, and subsequently, in the year 1800, to Sierra Leone, at the time of the Settler disturbance; and unfortunately, by entering the ranks against the old colonists, they regained favour with the English at the expense of a hatred and reproach from their fellow-citizens which have not to this hour entirely faded away.

Ludicrous displays of this animosity have occurred within my own experience. Shortly after arriving, when Settlers and Maroons were to me as equally black and

undistinguishable as Soosoos and Ibbos, I innocently inflicted deep injury on the sensitive mind of the laundress by inquiring why she had omitted to bring home some particular article of dress. In conversation the whites show deference to the blacks by adopting the "talkee-talkee" *patois;* and, to do as others did, I had sagaciously stored my memory with a few fashionable local phrases. In endeavouring to render myself intelligible, I became obscure, and, what is still worse, offensive. The exact idiom which wounded the pride of the Settler has already been forgotten; it was either "What *matter* for you no done bring him?" instead of the correct diction, "What *fashion* for you no done bring him?" or some nicety equally important, and of similarly difficult discrimination. It had the effect, however, of changing the mild maiden into a fury; "What! white man come for insult me! leff me, leff me! bad man, dis man, for true, 'peak a me so! me no Maroon, me tink; me Settler-girl and

you sabby." She departed in dudgeon. Not a little surprised at wrath apparently spontaneous and unprovoked, I sought my host, who at once perceived that I had ignorantly addressed the Settler in a Maroon idiom, and who intimated the chance of my being denounced by the whole Settler population if the dame chose to make the worst of the affair. I repeated the exact words, and the mistake was instantly detected and explained. The difference between the complimentary and the insulting, the Settler *patois* and the Maroon, was so slight and so non-essential that a professor of languages need not have blushed at the mistake. Explanation melted the moody maiden and reconciliation was not denied, strenuous and persevering hatred of white men not being an attribute of the sable ladies: she only observed, "Why for, den, you no can 'peak a me like Settler-girl? why for you done curse me wid Maroon word? pish, phoo, for true; me sabby de English good; no talk bad-palaver like Maroon girl;"

and the linen was henceforward duly honoured by her destructive care.*

At another time, during the wonted religious observations with which the same Settler was accustomed to prolong the process of writing the inventory, Matthews's droll account of a negro's "sermon-palaver" in the West Indies lay before me; and, curious to discover her opinion of it, I read it verbatim. After stumbling through the strange jargon as well as might be done by European lips, I asked whether her tenets corresponded with those of the preacher. "Pah! him no sabby how for preach gooden;" then, after a pause, "but preach so at Maroon chapel."

Five hundred and fifty Maroons landed at Sierra Leone in 1800, and this people is increasing in wealth and in numbers as rapidly as the Settlers are diminishing. Ignorant and careless of agriculture, they possess an acuteness of intellect, an in-

* It is pounded with stones and mallets in the brook.

genuity and active habit which have raised several to a competency and superior situation. As merchants and store-keepers, they have amassed fortunes, and been enabled to afford their sons every advantage of an expensive education in England; as labourers, they aptly acquire the mysteries of the arts, and, though not so sprightly in their work under a scorching heat as our own workmen in a temperate climate, they persevere and accomplish.

The commonalty, however, as it were, of the Maroons, are as yet entitled to but a small share of the praise due to civilization; the children of either sex often arriving at a late period of youth without assuming a vestige of clothing even in the capital, and the elders practising polygamy with as much simplicity and *gusto* as my friends the Timmanees. This is no recent habit with them; it caused a laughable scene in Nova Scotia, as narrated to me by a gentleman cognizant of the facts; and in Sierra Leone, where white residents are found who sanction the

custom under a different name, it is not to be expected that it should be laid aside.

When the Maroons, after their expulsion from Jamaica, were sojourners in Nova Scotia, a colonial chaplain was sent for their welfare by the English government. Their most obvious villany to denounce from the pulpit was plurality of wives; a crime rare and punishable in the west, a legal social relation in the east. The worthy preacher took an early opportunity of exhorting his hearers to monogamy. He dwelt upon the enormity of their offence. He demonstrated that, although they called many wives, one alone could claim that honourable name; and finally besought them to select each the spouse he loved best, and to put away the others, applying to the majority of the ladies sundry harsh and ungallant observations, and denouncing everlasting discomfort to such as contumaciously persevered.

The Maroons were struck, and listened. They were convinced, and acted

upon their conviction. Each determined upon cleaving to the wife he loved best, and abandoning the remainder. So far all was well. But these unfortunates must be supported, and to those who had hitherto been considered their husbands, and who had maintained them, they could look no longer. His Excellency, one fine morning, was astonished by the noise of clamorous multitudes besetting the gates of his mansion. He inquired the cause. The repentant Maroons had come in a body to deliver into his hands and care a crowd of widowed wives.

"What do you all want of me?" cried his Excellency in surprise.

Upspake the Maroons:—

"Preacher, good man; preacher say, wife no wife. Go to de Debbil, or put away wife but one. Well, den, here our wife all for you!"

They were instructed to seek the chaplain. He had caused the inconvenience, and he must remedy it. The chaplain had probably not remembered his sermon

so well as his hearers had done, or had hazarded advice without a dream that it would be accepted. Terribly was he overcome when the throng of consorts abandoned at his bidding were brought to him.

"Him take away wife," said his flock; "she no sabby where get yam-yam. Have no home, no sunting: missa parson, who take away wife, good man, can feed and keep her."

The affair ended in the chaplain declining to maintain the martyrs to his exhortation. The spouses returned home to their husbands, and lived as they had lived before, and so they live now. The sermon was not repeated.

I cannot forget the unsophisticated indifference with which a Maroon, a man of considerable cultivation of mind and of good property, a cam-wood merchant, whose conversation was both intelligent and instructive, gave me a place in his canoe, and seated me beside his youngest wife, a pretty slender girl, under twelve

years of age, in all the simplicity of tuntungee beads and cotton stripe. As we voyaged together towards the British settlement, he told me that the unclothed maiden was the youngest of four brides; that hitherto, since he had purchased her of her parents up the country, she had been under the superintendence of her older sister wives, but that, being now arrived at a proper age for assuming the duties of married life, he was taking her home.

The Maroons, as a race, are neither educated nor religious; the Settlers consider themselves both. Such as acknowledge Christianity chiefly frequent Wesleyan chapels. That of Jehovah Shallum is their principal "God-palaver house," and stands opposite to a building of at least equal popularity, a rum-shop. These two fashionable resorts seem to be upon cordial terms, playing into each other's hands as it were. A tide of votaries flows backwards and forwards; the languid spirit seeks from spirituous energy

a spiritual fervour; and the impetuosity of voice which explodes through the open doors and windows of the meeting-house, startling the horse of the passing wayfarer, excites other feelings as well as those of joy at negro righteousness. This applies, however, to a few only; the higher order of Maroons are, in essentials, the most respectable, enterprising, and valuable members of the Freetown negro residents, adopting to a great extent European customs and cultivating European tastes. But the same cause which has raised one portion of this interesting and improving tribe to a place deserving esteem—their mental vivacity and active habits, produces upon another—the ignorant and unworthy—an unfavourable result. Every nation has its rabble, and that of the Maroons is decided in its characteristics. Ability, however, resides in them; and it only remains for wise superintendence to elicit it by education, and by tempting them with opportunities of improvement.

A considerable number of the original emigrants, the actual insurgent warriors of Jamaica, have survived the lapse of years, and reside in Freetown at the present time. I had frequent conversations on the subject of their insurrection, and found that their own account considerably modified the harsh impression conveyed by the standard histories of the Maroon war. That they were guilty of atrocities which the rules of civilized warfare condemn, was admitted; but provocations and examples, not generally enlarged upon by the white men themselves, on the other side, were forcibly put in as extenuations, and even as justifying them.

I asked several Maroons why, after having successfully withstood the British troops for so long a period, slaughtering thousands, with the loss of less than thirty in their own ranks, they had at once given themselves up upon hearing that bloodhounds had been brought from Cuba to hunt them down. This was uniformly denied; and the reason invariably

assigned for their surrender was, that their ammunition had been completely exhausted, and that they had no means of obtaining fresh stores, especially as the Maroons of the remaining districts refused to unite in the war or to grant assistance.

The nationality of the Maroons in Sierra Leone is distinctly maintained. The head of the tribe, not more respected perhaps by his people than by the English residents, wears the name of King of the Maroons, but never wore crown or sceptre, or exercised royal prerogative. Two celebrated chiefs, well known in the Jamaica war, Generals Shaw and Montague, died but recently.

As the men are prompt and talented, so are the women peculiarly striking in figure and countenance. Their face and head are small, the features often regular, and the lips devoid of that superabundance generally attached to our ideas of a black; the expression is lively, and their conversation full of sprightly re-

partee, which in their strange dialect becomes irresistibly amusing. A simple answer is elegantly avoided; a direct question is responded by a periphrasis, or by another. They reply as though they possessed the forcible Greek particle. "Are you married?" inquired the Governor in council, in due form, to an applicant for a grant; "Married!" cried the young lady, smiling, "where me go for catch husband?"

Both Maroons and Settlers copy the European costume. The women wear the French head-dress of a smart twisted kerchief; over which the most extravagant or most tasteful tie a wide hat of sky-blue beaver or a light bonnet. Shoes and stockings are not fashionable; but rings and beads of gold, coral, and cut glass, copiously adorn the fingers, ears, and neck, and beneath the muslin gown a circlet of bead-strings jingles round the waist, as with the more numerous maidens of those unsophisticated tribes who discard the frivolities of dress altogether.

The large space of ground to the west of Freetown, extending to King Tom's Point, originally granted to the Maroons, has never been cultivated by them, nor practically held in possession, excepting that others are excluded from using it. It is a wilderness of shrubs and underwood, an interminable jungle of pine-apple, imbibing the annual torrents of rain, and, upon the return of the dry season, exhaling those pestilential vapours which give Sierra Leone its infamy.

CHAPTER VI.

VOLUNTARY COLONISTS—*Mussulmans.*

FOULAHS AND MANDINGOS.

Test of Wealth. — Costume. — Foulah Nations of the Interior — Teemba and Timbuctoo. — Gold Merchants.—Slave Traffickers.—Propagandists. —Wealth in Cattle.—Artisans.—Talisman Manufacturers.—Blacksmiths and Tailors.—Royal and privileged Trades.—Leather-working.—Cunning of Gold Merchants.—Their Roguery, and Ali Sannee's Confession thereof.—Mode of Gold-finding.—Divining Rod.—Theories—Kidnapping.

Amongst the distinct tribes who throng in this town of variegated costume and endlessly differing manners, the Mahometans are remarkable, not less for the dissimilarity of their appearance and habits from their fellow-citizens, than the rapidity with which their population has swollen within a few years. Holding

themselves aloof alike from the infidel Christian and the infidel Pagan of Freetown, they range their round mud huts upon the extreme eastern boundary of the capital, and allow a wide space of plain, intersected by a brook, to cut off from the place of prayer all pollution of vicinity to the dogs of unbelievers.

These swarthy disciples of the Prophet sweep past the English resident, whose most expensive dress is at best unsightly, and the naked Kroo, who prides himself on absence of clothing, in all the noble grace of loose and flowing drapery. The sun glances upon a high cloth peaked cap of scarlet and blue, a long full white robe with falling sleeves over a tight vest. Enormous indigo trousers to the knee, balloon-shaped, prove the wealth and importance of their owner, which is in exact proportion to the volume of material consumed in their construction; from twenty to thirty yards burdening a man of the first consequence. He walks with stately step along the hot street; his feet in red

leather sandals, bossed and ornamented; the sacred talismans or greegrees,—red leather cases an inch square, containing a precious tutelary sentence from the Koran,—are profusely suspended round the neck; a complicated cartridge-box, decorated with a multitude of tassels and cords of plaited leather, borne by warriors from Footatoro and Fezzan to Ashantee, hangs at his side, by the short and sturdy cutlass in its heavy scabbard, weapon of many services, sword in battle, hatchet in the overgrown bush-path, and knife when its sable master peels his cassada or carves his meat. Sometimes he carries, high over head, with outstretched arms, like a balancer's pole at Astley's, a ponderous musket; sometimes, following at a respectful distance, it is in the unworthy hands of a slave. The being so caparisoned is a Foulah, one of a strange race, whose origin is not as yet definitely ascertained. He arrests instant attention by the strong Arab and occasionally Roman features; the long plaited

ringlets that hang thickly to the shoulders, cut to equal length all round, black in mass, but when the light shines upon them obliquely, of a violet hue. The eye is thoughtful, the step measured, the rosary of beads in his hand: none can mistake him. He is a disciple of the Prophet of Mecca, he is the gold-merchant of the coast, and is more than suspected to carry on extensive commerce in human beings.

To dispose of his gold-dust, however, as it is called in England, although it is actually sold in the shape of twisted rings, is the ostensible reason, when any is assigned, for his visiting the white man's settlement; but strange to say, since the trade in this precious metal has dwindled to nothing at Sierra Leone, its professed dealers have wonderfully increased there. The Foulahs and Mandingos are often confounded. The former name is applied by Europeans to several distinct nations. Those on the banks of the Senegal, above Owal, are remarkable for their haughty in-

solence to strangers; bodies of this widely dispersed tribe dwell near the sources of the Gambia and Rio Grande. They are found at Footatoro, to the south of Fezzan, and on the confines of the powerful kingdom of Bournoo. Those of Timbuctoo and Soudan are called Fellatahs or Fellans. In the extensive territory between Senegambia and Guinea are branches of the Mahometan Soosoo, commonly named the Foulahs of Guinea. Teemba, visited by Major Laing and Adams, is the capital of the tribe; to which belong the greater part of the Foulahs of Freetown. The interesting Foulahs of the great empire of Soudan more rarely visit Sierra Leone.

The Mandingos are described by geographers as coming from the kingdom of similar name, near the sources of the Joliba, better known as the Niger, extending eastward through Bambara, and westward to Bambook and Woolly. The appellation, however, of Mandingo, seems to denote conversion to the tenets of Ma-

homet, rather than country. Those of Sierra Leone are in great measure Soosoos or Timmanees, who have forsaken their primeval worship of Satan for the morality of the Koran.

The zeal of the Foulahs in propagating the religion of their Prophet amongst the negroes is rewarded by success. Already have they penetrated through the western part of Africa, and gained a footing in every native town of any importance. Their faith is a false one; but, inasmuch as it recognises and enforces useful social relations, it is a valuable substitute for the paganism of the savage. Unlike the founder of the religion himself, and his most persuasive apostles, as Omar and Ali, the modern Mussulman multiplies the number of the faithful by the influence of superior mind, of advancement in the useful arts, and the attractions of becoming dress; and wherever they have settled down as residents, traders, and artisans, the devil-temples are sought by fewer votaries. Ambitious of attaining

the strong but silent power which the Foulah exercises over the people at large, the headmen of native towns hasten to confess themselves disciples. They become "bookmen," or learned; and wear the imposing robe of the Mussulman with an appropriate solemnity of countenance and demeanour that insures respect: in the Timmanee, Soosoo, and even Bullom towns the Ba, or chief, is often a Mandingo. This I found to be the case both in Magbelly and Rokel.

In Freetown the Mussulman population is very mixed, although classed under the most common heads of Foulahs and Mandingos. Unity of faith is a bond of close union. It is interesting to wander from the dull, silent suburb of the naked bachelor Kroos, where a thousand men dwell in heavy stillness, and no woman's form is seen or voice is heard, to the bustling streets of the Foulahs, rejoicing in numerous eloquent spouses, often gaily dressed, with a scarf floating from the head, and with hair wreathed with coral and

amber beads, and rings of the whitest ivory. Freetown is, indeed, a town of contrasts.

At sunset, when riding past their suburb, I frequently used to pause, listening to the deep-toned voice of the worshipper, who with arms reverently folded upon the breast, and turning towards the holy city, recites in prolonged and solemn cadence the sacred sentence. Their rudiment of a mosque is merely an oblong enclosure, marked off by single stones laid at short distances; one side having an opening for entrance. Humble as this temple is, it probably receives within its boundary more devotees than frequent the expensive and spacious church of the Establishment.

Zeal alone can scarcely have led to Freetown the legion of Foulahs and Mandingos who heighten the picturesque in its busy streets. However strenuously they make the extension of their religion, conquest, and political influence accompany them wherever they migrate amongst

the surrounding barbarous tribes, they must be aware that they have little scope for acquiring ascendency in the British Peninsula.

They are brisk traders, dealing extensively in cattle, and in articles of simple use manufactured by themselves. It is difficult to credit the accounts which the Foulahs give of the countless herds which are reared in their own country, and where their value is in consequence so low that a man possessing several hundred head may yet be considered poor. The gradually increasing consumption of animal food in Sierra Leone, and the steadiness of demand for articles of subsistence, ensured by habits of life daily becoming more settled, will improve the intercourse between the English colony and the country of the Foulahs, at present uncertain and difficult. Few men are more keen in pursuit of their own interest than the Foulahs; it is this principle which, in cautioning them against the rivalry of the white man, has hitherto

excluded us from the interior of his country. Experience is gradually proving to them that trade with the white man is advantageous; and the time may arrive when communication between Freetown and Teemba or Timbuctoo shall be as safe as between Freetown and Port Logo.

In the Foulah suburb of the capital of Sierra Leone we see artisans sedulously employed in various trades; making sandals and war-pouches, plaiting straw for hats, or writing Koran verses for sale. Their blacksmiths work ingeniously and well, in spite of the want of such tools as an English smith would consider indispensable. Sitting upon the ground, the Foulah holds his strange rude bellows between his legs, and contrives to heat his metal in a little heap of glowing charcoal. These bellows are of simple construction. A couple of calabashes, with a hole at the top of each, crowned with a band of loose goatskin or calfskin, are connected together by two hollow bamboos inserted into their

Etched by A. Hervieu.

Foulah Blacksmith.

sides and uniting at an angle, where another single straight bamboo is fixed, to serve as the nose. In working the apparatus, the Foulah grasps a skin in each hand; one he holds tightly and strikes it down upon the calabash, so that the air is forced through the tube at the side; at the same moment he is raising the other open skin to its utmost stretch, so as to contain as large a volume of air as possible; he then closes this with a firm hand and dashes it down; thus pumping precisely as though he were milking a "bull:" alternately raising and depressing, he maintains a uniform current of air through the single bamboo. The gaudy peaked cap, the curled ringlets upon the shoulders, and the abundance of cotton drapery falling to the ground during the operation, make the smithy of a Foulah a sight worth seeking.

The blacksmith, so called in Freetown, is the whitesmith, gunsmith, armourer, gold-worker, jeweller, and silversmith of the place. The Foulahs, like the Arabs,

from whom they have obtained their steeds, do not shoe their horses ; an important occupation with English blacksmiths.

I was present at the marriage of a white lady, whose massive ring, a specimen of a Foulah's skill, only betrayed its artist by the superabundance of that precious metal, which in his own country is weighed against silver as of equal value, if the word of my respectable informant, Ali Sannee, is to be trusted, which I much doubt. At the island of Tombo I was shown the lock of a rifle, which had been beautifully repaired by one of these men, who had never seen any excepting the fractured one in question ; he had made a new "bridle," and long examination was necessary to discover what part had been substituted. On first beholding a pair of fine steel spectacles, the astonished Mahometan lifted his hands in extreme wonder at their fine workmanship and spring, and, looking at me, uttered the wonted "Bismillah!" in the name of

God! yet he subsequently repaired them neatly and effectually.

Silver rings of portentous dimensions, shield-shaped and stamped with abstruse hieroglyphics, are favourite specimens of their art. In steel and leather work the Foulahs excel. To do them justice, however, they are great knaves; peace be to them! It is worthy of remark, that the blacksmith and the tailor are two of the honourable professions or castes; and, when in the wild country of the Timmanees, I have stood by the royal hovel of one of the great King Ali Carlie's sons, a convert, and watched the cross-legged prince plying his coarse needle as indefatigably and as regally as did his late majesty of Spain, of pious memory, when embroidering the garment for the Virgin.

His royal highness of Magbelly, however, was more selfish in his pursuit; being simply occupied in repairing an antique pair of his own trousers. Such peaceful tastes, such industrious habits,

such economical practice, are commendable, especially in a prince.

Africa has long been celebrated for its leather. The Foulahs prepare it in a superior manner, giving it substance and suppleness. In appearance and smell it more resembles Russian than Morocco. The woods are rich in barks saturated with the astringent principle favourable to tanning. The war-pouches, scabbards, sandal-bands and horse-trappings are dyed of various colours, chiefly red and black, and decorated with elaborate designs produced by pressure or puncture with the point of hardened wood.

The Foulah gold-merchants have introduced a singular mode of transacting business, and considerably inconvenient to one party at least; which that party shall be, he is always sufficiently wily to determine. On arriving at Sierra Leone, with their gold rings concealed in bands round their waist underneath their robes, the gold-merchants do not disclose their commercial intentions, but throw deep

mystery over the purpose of their visit. Walking into the white man's house, they hold gossip-palaver upon every subject but that which the man of business desires. A resident Foulah, a professed friend of the white man, and his procurer as it were, hints suspicions that his countrymen have brought gold. The greater the competition in the market, the more anxious is the one party to secure the secreted stores, and the more determined are the others to avoid allusion to the matter. He must conciliate them by customary attentions. He expresses profound delight that his friends from the Foulah country should have selected him as their entertainer, and trusts that they will allow him to lodge them during their stay in Freetown. He furnishes them with a house, and supplies them with provisions; they become his guests. Still they do not utter a word relating to the gold-dust, and days may elapse before business-palaver is opened. Even then they studiously avoid mentioning the

quantity of gold which they have brought. Cunning and deception are here, as elsewhere, too often mistaken for prudence and sagacity.

Meanwhile they are not idle, but are learning from their countrymen the state of the market and the most liberal buyers.

In due time negotiation is opened with their host; but, from caprice or the hope of a better price, the bargaining is frequently broken off at once, the ungrateful guests pass over to another white merchant, live upon him and cheat him in the same manner. Having been thus lodged and boarded gratuitously until the period for leaving Sierra Leone has arrived, they effect as good a bargain as they can and depart.

"White man big rogue, cheat black man; black man dam big rogue again, big too much for white man. Allah kerim! God is merciful!" quoth my black friend Ali, one genial day, in summing up sundry pieces of information-palaver.

"My sweet sable sir," quoth I, "for the last hour thy prophet Mammadoo has heard thine ebony tongue tell falsehoods more numerous than millet-seeds in a dish of Kuskusoo. By accident thou hast now spoken a truth! Salaam aleikum! Peace be with thee!"

Their method of discovering gold is preserved by them in profound secrecy, or rather is mystified by ingenious misrepresentations. It is known to occur in minute grains in the sand and mud of their fresh-water streams. The mineral is separated from the earth by repeated washings: but the propensity of the Foulah gold-finders to mislead, causes them to invent tales, sometimes sufficiently amusing to be wasted, alas! upon white man's incredulity.

Ali Sannee, assuming an innocent countenance and tone of artless simplicity, favoured me with one.

I had asked him, as an experienced professor in that branch of mineralogy, whether the report was true of gold

occurring near Freetown in the English colony. He assured me that it was found in considerable quantity.

"But where?"

"Oh! how could he tell where the gold *lived,* unless he himself saw it?"

"Did the blacks collect it?"

"Certainly."

"How did he account for the circumstance that hitherto no white man had discovered it?"

"White man him look for gold, him blind; black man look for gold, he see. Gold no love the white man, but love black man."

I reminded the Mahometan that his evil angel was sitting, as he well knew, upon his left shoulder; and that the good genius, perched at his right ear, was grieving at his crimes against truth.

"Me tell truth this time," answered he; "white man no sabby fashion for look for gold."

"In what fashion should he look?" I inquired.

"Foulah fashion," he proceeded; "Foulahman find gold — plenty too much. He dig big hole in ground; jump in hole; take gold stick in him hand; say word, shut him yyie, spit in hole; look! stick turn round and show where gold live; look! plenty gold live there!"

This story was not worthless. It proved a belief in the powers of the divining-rod. The gold-finders of Africa may make such use of a golden needle as Ali described, in connexion with closed eyes and muttered incantation, and it is not unlikely that they do so at times; but it is equally probable that they do not trust to it alone. Similarity of superstition may suggest similarity of origin, or ancient intercourse between different nations. The divining-twig of wych-elm or hazel is in active employment at the present day with the Cornish miners, inhabitants of the most civilised kingdom of the globe. Whence is it that the identical superstition is vigorous with the whites of Penzance and the blacks of Timbuctoo?

They have not enjoyed much opportunity of communication of late. So little certainty prevails regarding the origin of the Foulahs, that new theories are at a premium. The coincidence of belief in the efficacy of a divining-rod may serve as a foundation for one. Instead of imagining then that this singular tribe of men are either direct descendants from the first Arab converts of Mahomet, or are autochthenes, a distinct primal race, much might be argued to make us discover in them that long-lost respectable body which has been at the mercy of so many theorists, and placed by them in every ugly part of the world, from Patagonia to the Copper-mine River, from New Zealand to Tobolsk,—the ten tribes, who, having once wandered, have not yet been found. Their features are prominent, and they practise Jewish rites. Now, in early days the Phœnicians and Cornwall men were on friendly terms and saw much of each other; the inhabitants of Palestine, who sought the leg and foot of England for

the metal that flowed in the veins of that part, doubtless instructed the Britons to explore the lodes with the advantageous use of the divining-rod. Not to pursue steps obvious to all, the conclusion is a safe one: it is much easier to suppose that the Foulahs are descendants of the ten tribes than to prove they are not. Whatever their source, however, and under whatever name, they are an enterprising race of religionists, and, as Ali himself observed, "big rogues."*

The Foulahs and Mandingos of Freetown labour under heavy suspicion of

* It is the opinion of Von Müller that they are the true Carthaginians, and that Timbuctoo was founded by them on the destruction of Carthage. This opinion, probably an incorrect one, assigns them a Phœnician descent.

Connexion between the Cornwallers and Carthaginians is found in the old iambics of Festus Avienus in the fourth century:

"Propinqua rursus insula Albionum patet:
Tartesiisque in terminis Œstrumnidum (Scilly Isles)
Negotiandi mos erat Carthaginis
Etiam *colonis, et* vulgus inter Herculis
Agitans columnas *hæc adibant* æquora."

secretly transferring free blacks from Sierra Leone to the slave-market on the Bullom shore. Several thousand of those who have been liberated and have become British subjects have disappeared from the colony, and the opinion generally prevails that they have been kidnapped or inveigled into second slavery. The idea is distressing, but only too forcibly sustained by facts. A vast proportion of the Mahometan residents live without visible means of support; they are avaricious, cunning, unscrupulous; and the slave system being legal in their own land, does not wear a criminal character in their morality. They contrive to mingle much with the most ignorant and barbarous of the newly imported captives, and, as elsewhere, acquire an influence leading to mastery. By the blacks of Freetown they are uniformly considered as speculators in human flesh. At the trial for kidnapping which will be described in due place, although not charged as the culprit, a Mandingo had been in company with Banna,

the prisoner, in the canoe which contained the stolen boy already upon his way to the Bullom shore. The crafty policy of the learned Mussulman employs as the actual kidnapper some simple creature, who is easily induced by gold or promises to resume his hereditary habits. If the speculation succeed, the Mandingo secures the profit to himself; if it fail, he himself escapes by letting the blow fall upon the head of his dull agent whom he sees at the gallows with quiet philosophy.

Ali Sannee contumaciously disowned a propensity for slave-merchandise.

"Simply, I suppose, because you have no desire to be hanged, as Banna was," said I.

"Yes," he answered, "Foulah man no love for hang." He had previously advocated slavery, and boasted of his own achievements at home. On discovering, however, that the conversation was taking a direction which might involve him in unpleasant suspicions where slave-com-

merce was a capital crime, he had adroitly modified his opinion, and finally declared that every man had an equal right to personal freedom, but that the white man alone was sufficiently good and wise to adopt the principle. He said that "white man was good man, and black man bad man; but that, as Allah had been pleased to make him a black man, he could not help himself." "Allah ackoob'r!—God is just!"

CHAPTER VII.

VOLUNTARY COLONISTS—*Pagans.*

THE KROOMEN.

Undress.—Tattooed face.—Voluntary toil.—Kroo Nation.—Grain Coast.—Quest of White Men.—Canoe Voyages—their object.—Idea of Riches—Question of their impoverishing the Colony.—Kroo-town.—District of Bachelors—its silence.—Misnomers.—National Opposition to the March of Intellect.—Their Krikkegry-boo, or Dance of Death.—Allegory.—Musical Instrument.—The Carabas. — Kroo Wrestling-parties. — Kroomen held in contempt by the Black Residents.

The first occurrence upon your ship's arriving at Freetown is of a startling nature. From the shore, a multitude of narrow canoes, paddled by blacks, pull towards the vessel, and in a few minutes a swarm of savage-looking athletic beings

are boarding her, scrambling up the chains and springing on deck, where they appear to be bent on taking forcible possession. They are either entirely naked, or in the slightest possible remove from utter exposure of person : they come to seek employment in unloading and reloading, and offer their services in those arduous duties which no white seaman could discharge in the burning atmosphere of the teak and camwood rivers.

The eye does not soon become reconciled to the sight of the Kroomen, thickly and independently strolling in the streets of Freetown. The white man, strangely enough, clings to old habits so far as to appear abroad in the hottest hours with the cloth dress suited to an English May-day, occasionally only substituting a cooler material. The Maroon and Settler patronise a light European clothing; the Mahometan wards off the heat by voluminous folds of cotton; but the cocoanut-skinned Krooman saunters by with the smallest handkerchief he can procure

tightly bound round his middle, and displays to the full advantage of the curious a glossy muscular person, tattooed and painted in elegant patterns. The tattooed, cut, or burnt wounds upon the face are assumed as distinctive blazonings of different tribes. The Kroo bears his credentials strongly figured upon him. The marks of his nation are very definite. Down the face is drawn a broad straight line of deep black running from the apex of the forehead along the ridge of the nose, and continuing through the upper and lower lip and chin. In fact, it divides the countenance into two equal parts. A black arrow-head at the outer angle of each eye completes his heraldry.

Nationality having been thus secured, taste has a wide field for exercise upon the surface of the back, chest, and abdomen, the arms and legs. Tracery and emblematic figures, circles and vandykes, stars and squares, make the outward man a walking carpet. At the wrist and ankle, a leopard's tooth, secured by twine, is

nearly universal. It is a charm combining medicinal with spiritual virtue.

These good fellows, and fine specimens are they of the animal man, serve as the gallegos, the labourers, the out-of-door servants, and the cooks of the colony. Their ways are curious.

The Kroo republic, upon the Grain Coast, lies at a distance of about four hundred miles to the south of Sierra Leone, to the north and west of Cape Palmas. Five principal towns, each the metropolis of a district under different head-men, are united for the common weal. A Kroo, who stated himself to be one of these head-men, answered my inquiry, why he had come so far in order to be cook to an English gentleman at Freetown for two or three and twenty shillings per month, by saying "Krooman no can live from white man; white man love work, Krooman love work; white man no slave, Krooman no slave: where white man go, there Krooman must come."

One of the most remarkable peculiari-

ties of this singular people is their detestation of slavery. They are insulated in this respect; and it would be an interesting subject for investigation from what circumstances this aversion to a practice of immemorial custom in every people and tribe around them had its rise and confirmation. To a universal rule obtaining through all the kingdoms of the coast, the Kroos alone claim exception. Upon this ground, more from the philosophy of fellow-feeling than ethnological research, Kea claimed kindred with the white man; a claim not easily to be allowed.

Paddling his shallow and sharp canoe, scooped from a single tree, the Krooman performs the long voyage from his own country to the English settlement; and encounters many dangers before he reaches the place chosen by him for long and severe exertions, voluntarily sought and cheerfully endured. He sits upright in the bottom of the canoe at the stern, and, unlike rowers in general, faces

the bows. He holds a single paddle, short and club-shaped, with both hands, as he would hold a spade, and splashes or rather digs the water on one side only. The little bark never glides, therefore, in a direct line to the point of destination, but glances to the right; when the Kroo shifts his paddle to the other side, and turns obliquely to the left; and notwithstanding this alternate tacking, he contrives to dart with such rapidity that he can overtake small vessels under easy sail.

So light and frail is his canoe that it is repeatedly overturned at sea, and is constantly full of water. The first calamity occurs too often to cause him uneasiness; he swims like a porpoise by its side, he soon rights it, bales out a little of the brine and springs again into it, none the worse for the wetting, since he wears no dress, and during the greater part of his perilous voyage sits in water to his middle. But more fearful dangers than those of blast and billow await him. Upon the

coast between the Kroo territory and Sierra Leone dwells a savage and merciless tribe, a species of sable sea-kings, who lie in wait for the unprotected Kroo voyager, and attack and plunder him; depriving him, on his return home, of the accumulated profits of years of servitude.

In seeking white man's society, the Kroo has a steady view to the acquisition of wealth. Accustomed to the most abject want, a trifle is a treasure to him. He arrives young at Freetown, and labours as an apprentice for the advantage of a Kroo master; and when sufficiently old, after two or three years of obedience, upon his own account. He takes apprentices in his turn, and receives their wages. Of twenty shillings a month, earned by himself, he does not probably spend one. He is sparing in his expenses, frugal in his* diet, and pays no tailor's bills. In-

* The Kroo shows Epicurean taste in one respect only; the flesh of a dead dog is his greatest delicacy.

tent upon adding to his income, his industry never flags; and, above all, he is an accomplished thief.

At the age of forty he has generally succeeded in amassing about thirty pounds sterling, and has then attained the summit of earthly grandeur. He lays out the useless coin in marketable articles, for his native home is guiltless of a metallic currency; and returns to dwell with his people as a "gentleman." Now the term gentleman is a vague one, and does not specifically point out the future station of the Kroo; with us there are gentlemen farmers, gentlemen of the jury, of the press, of the swell mob, of the House of Commons, of the long robe. A Kroo gentleman belongs to neither of these honourable fraternities, but describes the class as being "rich too much, plenty of wife." An otium cum dignitate crowns his old age, the reward of a youth devoted to toil. In payment of this useful and at present indispensable class of labourers, some thousands sterling are supposed to be an-

nually drawn from the colony; a supposition which has caused opinions unfavourable to the employment of the Kroos. This fear is quite gratuitous; for it must be remembered that no coin is carried away to embarrass the bank, had there been one, which there is not. The merchant and community, on the contrary, are much benefited by a consumption of profitable merchandize; which, being carried to distant markets, will increase the demand for English manufactures in proportion to the spreading knowledge of their utility and value.

There are no Kroo women in Sierra Leone; it would answer no good purpose to bring them. The Kroos are practical political economists of the modern school, and do not wed until mature age and adequate income justify the joys of matrimony. Kroo-town, therefore, presents an unrivalled instance of a bachelor village. I have strolled through the clusters of their square, loosely wattled sheds, arranged without order, unfurnished and

comfortless, which constitute this most strange suburb of Freetown, and thought of monasteries. Groups of naked men are seen busy in low-voiced gossip-palaver, or lying drowsily on the bare ground, courting sleep after labour, before huts without windows, and scarcely of sufficient size to permit a tall man to extend his limbs to their full length; but no woman could be espied. Hut after hut presents the same dull scene,—the earth, the hovel, and the inhabitant, motionless and of similar tint. About a thousand males are congregated together in this community of bachelors. The hollow silence which broods over this noiseless quarter of the unmarried suggests several reflections.

The Kroos display much acuteness. Kea argued cleverly on the existence of the devil, which he disbelieved. His arguments were precisely similar to some favourite sophistries of white sceptics; hingeing upon want of personal evidence, the balance of probabilities, and the opposition of experience. Now faith in Satan

is the fundamental keystone of African theology and theogony; so that Kea's hardihood in denying was not so marvellous as his daring to allow himself at first even to speculate on such established mysteries.

The Kroomen, in constant contact with the English sailors, especially the man-of-war's men, whom they assist as supernumeraries, generally bear some adopted name less uncouth or less unintelligible than their native "Sampoo," "Tappee," "Nymba;" and readily answer to the substitutions of the witty or witless. Flying Fish, Bottle of Beer, Bottle more, and Jack Frying-pan are the most usual; Jem Doe, and Richard Roe, and King Tom, are common. The lady of the house soon loses all idea of the ludicrous when desiring Mashed Potato, the horseman, to order Bubble and Squeak, the cook, to send his brother the Duke of Wellington, or the Marquis of Granby, to purchase fish.

The nation is an ignorant one. In Free-

town, individuals, perceiving the great advantage of knowledge in the white man, are desirous of instruction; but their countrymen at home are so averse to white man's book, as they term education, that any who returned thither, after a residence in Sierra Leone, with English schooling, would inevitably be sacrificed to the prejudices against it. With much natural aptitude for mental cultivation, few will accept it on so heavy a condition as perpetual exile from their relatives and native town. I have, however, seen two or three Kroomen content to incur banishment from this cause, and busily employed with slate and pencil, working multiplication-sums of gigantic dimensions for sheer amusement. Logarithms, by shortening the process, would take from arithmetic much of its attraction.

The Kroos at times enliven the streets of Freetown with their national dance, called the Krikkery-boo or Dance of Death; a series of descriptive attitudes, as are all the dances of African barbarians. Un-

like the melancholy grievings of the Papaw women, who touch the heart with their plaintive melody and slow drooping movement as they beat their bosom, and with down-cast eyes seem to weep, giving the impression of deep-seated and unutterable woe; unlike the furious threatening of the Akoo, who throws his savage countenance into the most hideous contortions, and rages with phrenzied gestures, to the terror of the bystanders; unlike the moonlit gliding of the soft Talala of the Maroon maidens, and the circle-dances of the young Timmanees, the Kroo enacts a drama in which Death is the prominent hero. An allegory occurred to me as obvious when I have witnessed this exhibition. A Mandingo greegree-man* of surpassing charms, (not those of face or figure, for the most repulsive object is generally selected, but articles manufactured for the conciliation of the devil), dressed in extravagant style,

* "Greegree-man,"—a charm-bearing man, or wizard.

and graced with rough goatskins to heighten his deformity, sang a low monotonous recitative and played upon the gumbay, a simple musical instrument, whose sound is produced by striking beadstrings against the sides of a dry calabash. Two Kroos approach the greegree-man, creeping and shuffling round him; crouching so nearly to the ground, the common attitude of male dancers, as to appear sitting. He awaits them unmoved and with indifference. One now braves him, flourishing the formidable war-knife with its broad sharp blade; Death smiles, but does not flinch. The courageous Kroo shows the more contempt for the grim musician, rushing forwards at him, retreating, and returning to level a mortal blow at Death in front, on each side, and behind. The fiend remains imperturbable; on each attack merely advancing one foot with a smart stamp, which scares the Kroo for a moment. Each dancer performs the exploit, and each is scared in turn, trembling and

covering his face from the hideous representative of the King of terrors. Both now unite, they press forwards together to assault their invulnerable foe; both knives are raised, Death advances one step towards each; their valiant hearts quail, their uplifted hand falls, the harmless blades are gently crossed above the skull which they had in vain essayed to fracture; the assailants kneel before their unarmed conqueror, bow down before him, and remain motionless. Death changes his measure, and strikes the beadstring calabash more briskly; the dead men start up, cut a few agile capers, and the dance is over.

The details vary slightly; and I have seen the dance performed without the use of the coosoo knife. The minstrel, in this instance, was a Mandingo. In the hands of a Kroo we find a different instrument, their own carabas; a soft clear-toned lyre, formed by three short sticks in the figure of a triangle, strung with seven chords of tough round grass and tuned to the

minor scale. This lyre is inserted at one angle into the side of a hollow calabash, or dried gourd, to give depth to the tones. An accomplished Kroo troubadour can strike his light guitar to very pretty native melodies, and combine with them wild harmony of considerable beauty.

The Kroos appear to be the only negroes who seek active bodily exertion as a pleasure. In this tribe alone did I find any games of strength or agility at all corresponding with the manly amusements of our own rustics. They delight in wrestling matches, and in the display of vigour, skill, and perseverance. Their strength is almost superhuman. The Kroos will not submit to the heavy idleness with which the other races show their reverence for the sabbath-day, but, being released from the harsher duties of service to their white masters, devote hours to the indulgence of their favourite passion for wrestling; and rival parties or factions meet on the sands of the little bay called Kroo Creek, to gratify ambition or

to maintain acknowledged pre-eminence. Far and wide may be heard the shout of victory as a champion hurls his antagonist to the earth. The process is not unlike that with which we are familiar, but is introduced with more ceremony. A clean circle of spectators, well kept by strong fellows armed with ropes' ends or short staves, incloses a space of a dozen yards in diameter.

A brawny hero, perfectly naked, steps forth and vaunts with preposterous gestures, leaping and dancing, and spurning the dust with his feet in all directions, like a bull proud and in wrath. He thus springs backwards and forwards, and singles out by turns for his disdain all the finest-looking men in the assemblage, inviting them contemptuously to certain destruction; and, as his insult is disregarded, turning on his heel, and flirting up the dust at them behind him with his toe. But his vaunting excites the ambition of some noted wrestler, who cannot endure to see the challenger thus glory in his

superiority undisturbed. The challenge is accepted; and the rival, entering the arena, capers round the first boaster, snaps his fingers at him in scorn, and dashes the dust over his person. Each now acts the same part, leaping round his antagonist, sometimes with a prodigious bound, then stooping in a sitting posture upon the ground, and kicking up the earth; a prelude in which considerable time is spent. This introduction to the more serious contest was inexpressibly ludicrous to me; yet it always extorted long and fervent applauses from the bystanders, who repaid every excessive demonstration of vigour or contempt on either side by tumultuous cheers. Having sufficiently shown their confidence in their own superiority, and their perfect disdain for each other, they approach slowly and cautiously, endeavouring by every wily means to win an advantageous close; eyeing each other intently and scornfully, advancing a hand or a foot as an offer; speedily withdrawing it, however, when in an unfa-

vourable position. At length the hand is seized, and the combatants are in an instant locked in iron embrace. The struggle for mastery is terrific but short. Upon the slightest inequality of advantage, the lucky Kroo summons his whole energy, makes a strong grasp upon the leg and shoulder of his gigantic opponent, lifts him off his feet, and dashes him to the earth. I have more than once seen the victor hurl the vanquished with amazing violence over his head.

The issue of the contest never appeared to disturb the amicable feelings of the parties engaged. Sometimes the successful hero encounters a series of emulous Kroos, until he himself falls, or departs amidst the plaudits of the assemblage, full of honour. Sometimes the unfortunate in one encounter burns to retrieve his character, and springs forth as challenger. The sport is always welcome to them.

The Kroos, superior to the natives of the western coast in general in intellect

and industry, and above all in their detestation of slavery, are uniformly despised by the Settlers and Maroons, and, in great measure, by the liberated blacks of Freetown. This circumstance may partly result from the very fact of their superior feeling in regard to a commerce both profitable and beloved, but is probably more owing to their self-degradation as willing servants in any capacity. It offends the prejudices of those blacks, who themselves scorn as men to perform the labours assigned by the savage to women, when they behold the Kroos making no such discrimination, and even in Kroo-town dispensing with women's services; pounding and boiling their own rice, cooking their own food. The Kroos, too, preserve the distinctness of their community more than is usual with others. They are perfectly exclusive: none but their tribe may dwell in Kroo-town; none are invited or induced to visit it. Their peculiar habits are rigidly maintained; no innovation is permitted.

Under the influence of one ruling impulse, the acquirement of wealth to become "gentlemen," and to return as such to the Kroo coast, they take no interest in the general concerns of the town, and, as much as possible, avoid unnecessary intercourse with their fellow colonists. The Freetown maidens, of similar complexion, cannot mention the word Krooman without a sneer; and, were a sable Juliet to forget herself so far as to look with equanimity upon a Kroo Romeo, she would at once lose grade, and be excluded from the society of those who might wed with impunity the most atrocious cannibal from the banks of the Bonny. Happily for the Kroomen, they are not ordered by their masters to love. Hard work, sleep, and wrestling fill their time; they are ungallant without doubt; but they benefit the white men and they please themselves.

CHAPTER VIII.

VOLUNTARY COLONISTS.

EUROPEANS.

Numbers.—Motives.—Classes.—Analogy between the English and the Kroomen.—State of Society.—A Household.—Houses.—Unceremonious Visitors.—Innovation.—Sensitiveness.—Polite Diction.—Servants.—Mary.—Ornamental Hair.—Cookery.—The Reformation and Pancakes.—Dinner Parties.—Races.—Dignity Ball anecdote.—A conscious Beauty.—Riding.—Chasing Coquettes.—Contrast between Town and Country.—A Wish.

The smallest class of voluntary residents, which demands separate consideration, consists of white men. These have not amounted to above a hundred at one time since the substitution of black troops for the English regiments. They are principally officers of Government filling

official situations, which are vacated upon promotion, or departure after definite length of service; so that, although the census varies little, the individuals are constantly changed. A few merchants, whose monopoly is seldom invaded by white speculators, and the missionaries, complete the list. The average of stated white residents in the whole peninsula of Sierra Leone, from 1818 to 1834, was eighty-four males and thirteen females; or ladies and gentlemen, as they may be described more safely than technically.

Appetite for appointments with tempting salaries, and occasionally respectable pensions, is generally supposed to account for Sierra Leone boasting even this small population of whites; for the gold trade having forsaken this settlement for the Gambia, and losses having been felt in the teak export, there are not many obvious inducements to lead mercantile men to Freetown. I say obvious inducements, because I am strongly persuaded that the real advantages of the spot are unknown

to the greater number of those who live there, and are still more beyond the knowledge of strangers. Stated and profitable occupations, and the tendency of the climate to repress active investigation, will account for this. When I have been assured that the vanilla-nut abounds; have passed through fields of formium tenax, so valuable for cordage as to be worth freighting to Great Britain from New Holland; have seen the caoutchouc-tree yielding plentifully its india-rubber,—an article of daily increasing consumption; where the coffee is found rebuking with its full crop of almost too aromatic berries the negligent and sparing hand that scarcely takes the trouble of planting it; where the soil delights to produce rice and sugar-cane, cotton, cinnamon, and ginger, and indigo spontaneously covers the streets of the capital; while medicinal plants, as jalap, Jesuits' bark, and the castor-oil tree, and dyes of the richest quality abound; where gold is ascertained to occur in the vicinity of the town;

without considering the possibility of enlarged commerce with the independent tribes of the interior, it must be regretted that little capital is employed, and that that little is confined to the timber-trade.

The position of the white colonists will be easily understood. Besides the merchants, not amounting to perhaps twenty, nearly every European wears the gold brocade or the button of office. Attracted, as I have heard sundry gentlemen confess, by the very high emoluments accorded to service in what is considered an unhealthy climate, they pass a few years in the colony, uninterested in its permanent prospects, unaffected by its progressive improvement; of their generous salaries amassing a considerable portion, to be spent in England when the period of service or the realisation of competency allows of return. All naturally look to England as their home, and anticipate spending their last days in the mother country.

"Nothing," observed a gentleman about to retire from the colony, and enjoy in

Great Britain those comforts which long residence in Freetown had enabled him to secure, "nothing justifies emigration hither short of a poverty in England which absolutely denies subsistence."

Exceptions may be found to the above proposition, which I believe to be true as a general one. The discomforts of society are too obtrusive to throw charms over a Sierra Leone life sufficiently fascinating to detain those whose tastes and habits are in accordance with European experience. To the enthusiastic traveller, the physiologist, and the naturalist alone, can the spot be considered attractive.

It follows, therefore, that men may return with accumulated wealth or a magnificent pension, to pass the evening of their days in Great Britain, after dwelling in the Peninsula for many years, without having left a deed on record to make their memory live twelve months after their departure.

The Krooman who compared his tribe with the white men was not aware of the

strong similarity between the two classes of voluntary colonists,—in their both being migratory; seeking it for the same purpose; leaving it on the same result. The one, it is true, is a servant, the other is the master; and though the fortune of 30*l.* or 40*l.* which releases the "gentleman Kroo" from his exile, would not release the white man, the end is one and the same.

The migratory Kroo, however, is a more beneficial visitor than the migratory white man. He does not carry his capital away, but spends his coin in the colony, increasing the consumption of profitable merchandise; whilst the white man, by remitting to England, and there distributing money to a large amount gathered together in Sierra Leone, deprives the colony of a manifest advantage. The circulation is marvellously contracted, and money of high denomination is so rare, that, although the English sovereign is current, I have offered it in payment and found it refused as an unknown coin.

The white population consists, almost exclusively, of officials under the patronage of the Foreign and Colonial departments at home. The latter appoints the Lieutenant-governor, who bears by courtesy the title of Governor and Excellency; the Chief Justice, whose "home circuit" extends from Cape Coast to the Gambia, a tour of assize carrying him some thousand miles; the Colonial Secretary, the Colonial Chaplain, the Colonial Architect, the Head of the Liberated Department, and writers or clerks attached. The Foreign Office names the Judges and Registrar of the Court of Mixed Commission,—a court established to carry into effect the treaties between such powers as have co-operated with Great Britain in suppressing the slave-trade.* The officers, military and commissariat, must be added. Their stay in the colony depends upon orders from England.

The white men are chiefly bachelors. Of those who are married, all do not desire

* See Process of Slave Liberation.—Chap. xvi.

to expose their ladies to the chances of the climate, or the tedium of a small and dispersed community; but leaving them at home in Britain, live as bachelors. The tone of society is affected by this circumstance. The ten or twelve ladies who have had the heroism to accompany their lords to this part of Africa, have little opportunity of intercourse amongst themselves; partly from distance of abode, partly from etiquette, which even here intrudes to split the number already so small into different circles. During my continuance in Freetown, I never on any occasion had the happiness of meeting so many ladies as four, even at parties at Government-house; and one unmarried white lady only existed throughout Sierra Leone.

The bachelors, excepting the military and naval officers, are not usually admitted to the privileges of intimacy in the houses of the married; perhaps owing to the customs of the place, which effectually preclude a white lady from accompanying

her husband to mansions of an unmarried gentleman, where the coloured or black mistress might not show deference.

The state of society may be gathered from a simple fact. In the principal burying-ground stands a handsome monument, erected by a late governor, to the memory of a young coloured girl, an especial favourite. I was informed that the attendance of the principal government functionaries was desired to give public pomp to her funeral. The epitaph is copied verbatim and needs no comment :

To the
Memory of
Mary Esmond,
who departed this life,
aged fifteen years
and eleven months.
And of her infant son,
who died in the same hour,
on the same day,
aged twelve hours.

The household of a European presents a strange mixture of the luxurious and

the uncomfortable, the sensual and the oppressive. The house itself is planned with studious care for comfort. It consists of one building within another, as it were; or in a shell of piazzas and verandahs. The verandahs are altogether unlike the green iron railings and painted roofs which essay to throw an Eastern splendour upon the rural villas around London; they are wide and lofty rooms, extending the whole length of the house, having in their outer walls, at regular intervals, windows called jalousies, capable of being closed with strong venetian blinds against the sudden and impetuous fury of the tornado, and the unwholesome night-air, but at other times remaining open. The walls between the jalousies are painted or papered, and may be ornamented with paintings; the floors, are sometimes matted or carpeted. They are furnished with tables, chairs, and ottomans; and are in fact occupied as the most pleasant apartments during the heat of the day, for the breeze from the ocean pours

through them, in a cool stream, unceasingly. Here the leisure hours are spent, visits received, and the lighter repasts taken; and, when timid sleep cannot be tempted to enter the close and sultry chamber, it will often steal upon a hard couch in the verandah.

The inner rooms are spacious, and boast one or two fire-places,—an anomaly to the stranger who arrives at any period between October and May, with a spirit sinking beneath the sun's tyranny; but very grateful, indeed indispensable, during the inclement chill of June and July, and the remaining wintry months of wind and water. The furniture is rather useful than plentiful. Sofas and couches remind of languor and invite to indulgence. It is common to see upon a side-table, ready for constant use, the porous water-bottle, with neck like a swan and body like an alderman; and by its side, in a cooler mostly very warm, a little yellow oil called butter, and sold like oil by liquid measure; together with a small ill-favoured

roll of bread, harsh from the acidity of palm-wine leaven.

The Englishman's house is "no castle" here; it offers free entrance to all blacks or browns who have a whim to inspect it or to make a visit. Habits are still so primitive, that no dwelling in Freetown boasts bell or knocker. Monsieur Tonson would have found it an asylum. The outer door is generally left open during the day; and the consequence is an influx of wives and daughters of the butcher, tailor, carpenter, and mason, at all times and without ceremony. They stroll in perfect ease through the apartments, repose on the couches of the verandahs and inner rooms at pleasure, and would consider hindrance or expulsion a breach of privilege.

A civil officer of high colonial rank, having submitted to the custom for some time, chanced to marry. The comfort of his English lady rendered it expedient that orders should be issued for the door to be closed, a porter stationed in the

entrance-hall, and unnecessary visits declined. The black laundress soon after this stern decree strolled that way, and, to kill an idle hour, approached, as she had been wont, to loiter in the verandahs, hold gossip-palaver with the tattooed valet, lean lazily from the jalousies to criticise the people and goats in the street, to examine the men of war in the river through the telescope, or volunteer assistance in the pantry. The new regime was explained, and indignation shook the visitor. She insisted on admission.

"Why for she no can come in dis time? Have right for come in! House not grand house too much!" The servant continued inexorable, and she departed in dudgeon, exclaiming,

"Master can wash him linen himself for true—pshaw! she no come noder time—pish!"

It is by no means impossible for the legitimate occupant of a house to return from a walk or ride, and find his premises in complete possession of such friends;

some in one part, some in another, examining the furniture, books, and paintings, cooling themselves with refreshments, and taking their rest on the sofas. When the customs of the place were yet new to me, upon entering my chamber one day, I discovered a stranger absorbed in scrutinising the contents of my wardrobe; she was taking out the articles of dress one by one, criticising their texture and value: the intrusion was innocent, and merely *pour passer le temps;* and I doubt whether she considered it as a rebuke or symptom of displeasure at her employment, when I bribed her to depart by a present of the most gaudy handkerchief she could select. At the festivity of the next moonlit Koonking, she proudly wore it bound round her woolly head.

Even the solemn privacy of the dinner-table (and what solemnity can be more religiously protected in civilized society ?) is liable to similar invasions. On one such occasion, whilst the earnest enthusiasm of

the silent white men was absorbed by soup and snapper, calliloo and pepper-pot, ochro and papaw, and twenty other tropical amiabilities, not forgetting laudable claret in its wet cool crystal and Madeira's choicest sap, there came upon them a sudden apparition of a black face, calmly observing through a window the whole process of nutrition. The lady had seated herself upon an ottoman in the verandah outside, and was evidently enjoying the eye-feast.

"Me no trouble with hurry too much; me can wait," said she, in a patronising tone, addressing our host without changing her posture, as soon as she was perceived.

"Eat you dinna; me look and see; me no hurry."

Business was now her apology. Her husband, the carpenter, had made a mistake in naming the length of certain palings which had been procured according to his admeasurement; and his better

half had called to state the mistake, and to demand a fresh supply.

"Stakes no good; stakes short too much," said the carpenter's wife.

"Your husband himself named the size," answered our host.

"Stakes no good for sunting," repeated the lady.

"I shall send no others; he must use them as well as he can."

"Use! no use," continued she with proper perseverance.

My friend summed up the controversy by saying "they would be better if longer; but, such as they were, he must make shift to use them." The sensitive *artiste* instantly sprung from her seat in offended modesty, whining and saying,

"Oh! you bad man, for true, to 'peak such word, and me a married woman!"

She walked away from the window, glowing with timid shame, and doubtless blushing internally, although the rosy hue was not externally visible: and covered

her dark face with bashful hand. She returned, however, in a few moments, resumed her seat at the window, and remarked,

"Why for you say '*shift*' clean off? why for you no can say '*shimmy*?' him more genteel, more modest."

Home and its comforts suffer considerable modification from such habits.

Servants are almost invariably men. Those who dwell in the house are superintended by a confidential negro or majordomo, at a salary of thirty to forty pounds. The remainder, chiefly boys, often consider the advantage of belonging to a white gentleman's establishment sufficient remuneration. Even neighbouring chiefs, Timmanees and Soosoos, deem their sons in favour with Fortune if they can obtain such service. In one household, numbering five or six men-servants, the principal only received wages; and the second in command, a valuable man, was the eldest son of a chief ruling a district upon the Scarcies, and as a young chief he indig-

nantly refused to accept pay. He had cheerfully discharged the duties of valet for some years, and during that time had visited England with his master. The tribe of which he will become governor upon the death of the old head-man, his father, will derive advantage from the situation which the youth has filled, when he quits the English colony and the Englishman's service for his own distant native village, and enters upon the duties of head-man, with good knowledge of the English language and the usages of civilized life. He, in common with most young black servants of white men, discovers a taste for reading and writing, in which he is a proficient.

His only sister came up from the Scarcies to visit him. I thought I could perceive a sense of the disagreeable as he proceeded to show the unsophisticated young woman the wonders of the white man's town ; and, being clothed himself, he seemed to feel uncomfortable at offering his arm even to a sister, because she was

unclothed according to the ordinary custom of the unmarried of the independent negro tribes. King Caulker introduced garments amongst the Sherbros, and this servant-chieftain may perhaps do the same when his day of power arrives.

Some of the best masters in Freetown make a rule of enforcing upon their younger domestics regular attendance at the schools; and I know an instance where the gentleman of the house takes so deep an interest in the progress of his negroes, that he attends to no request, and receives no complaint, unless when carefully written down. The result is, that boys of twelve or thirteen years of age, who have entered his service with slight knowledge of any language but that of their nation, are good penmen and good orthographists.

Women-servants are not to be found, excepting where a lady presides: a rare occurrence. It was my fortune to spend some days at the hospitable mansion of a married man, and to have the means of

deciding that a lady's-maid is the most singular piece of furniture in a Freetown house. The plump little woman, acknowledged by all to be the most favourable specimen of the species in the colony, had entered upon her duties with an unostentatious wardrobe of the single scanty frock which she wore upon first presentation. She was a heavy, matronly-looking person, although not thirteen years of age; and to an English eye would have appeared more nearly sixteen or eighteen. Her face displayed every exaggeration of negro feature,—the receding forehead, flat nose, and luxuriant lips, which seemed unable to check their fertile growth. In default of gay clothing, characteristic of white Abigails, Mary's glory consisted in a blue necklace, and more particularly in her short, crisp, woolly hair, tufts of which, being tightly plaited, projected stiffly in all directions, like so many horns, to the distance of an inch and a half from the head; whilst, in absence of ear-rings, a chip of straw or dry stick was

inserted into a perforation in each ear. Vanity is ever most complacent when most empty.

Attached to each house are several out-of-door servants. They are Kroomen. Of these, the cook, and the horseman or groom, have definite duties; the remainder are employed in any capacity that may be necessary. One generally superintends the rest, and receives higher wages. They depart at night to their own suburb, Kroo-town; with the exception of two or three trusty fellows, who sleep in an open shed or outhouse during the dry season, and during the rains take refuge in large boxes placed near the gateways, and not unlike dog-kennels, for which they have been mistaken by the uninitiated. What seemed strange to me was that Kroomen should be chosen as cooks: and I was astonished in finding men, whose own spare diet is rice flavoured with palm-oil, at home in the recondite mysteries of Ude, Kitchener, and Dolby; in fact, perfect Carêmes. At a fire of sticks thrown

upon a stone or mud floor, the Kroo cook roasts his meat, concocts the savoury pepper-pot or soup—essence of antagonistic predicaments—fries and stews, bakes and boils; and, himself of artless taste, skilfully mingles the aromatic spice with white man's pepper, promoting close union between friendly atoms, and reconciling discordant elements in a racy confederacy.

A humorous illustration of the relation between master and servant, and of that between servants themselves, may be acceptable. The characteristic simplicity of the lower tribes of negroes, which would be vainly sought amongst the peasantry of England, does not speedily wear away even under the roof of a European. Sophistication, like other equivocal desiderata, needs long tutoring.

A petty crime had been committed by a domestic. He had endeavoured to escape rebuke by throwing the blame upon the black lady's-maid. Her stubborn complexion refused to betray her inno-

cence by appropriate change of colour, or to show silent indignation at this compound case of dishonesty and ungallantry. She was thus thrown on the defensive, and offered to exculpate herself by evidence. The lord of the mansion summoned into the state-room all his retinue of domestic retainers, Kroos and Akoos, Ibbos and Congos.

The trial commenced. He sat as judge. The pleadings were opened, witnesses were heard. When the truth had been satisfactorily brought to light,—the innocence of the innocent established, and the guilt of the offender made clear,—the master proceeded to pronounce sentence. The culprit was ordered then and there to be stripped and deprived of those ornamental integuments named trousers, and to return to his duties in the unseemly state to which he would thereby be reduced. The punishment was to endure for a whole day, and the criminal left the room under a more severe sense of humiliation and indignity than would have resulted from the harshest personal chastisement.

No idea of indelicacy could, for a moment occur to any of the party, who saw in those garments no more than mere ornament or proof of wealth ; but the proud privilege of appearing in European dress having been once attained, a temporary abeyance of the privilege hurt the man's pride and exposed him to the ridicule of his fellow-servants.

The cooks are superior men, sometimes Kroo chiefs, for their duties demand the best skill, and are rewarded with the most liberal wages. Kea, the philosopher and musician, catered to the palate of a Judge of the Commission Court ; whilst the condiments and viands that laughed upon the board of his honour the Chief Justice, resulted from the learned labours of Tappee, an unrobed beau of exquisite pretensions, readily conceded to his necklace of blue glass beads, his long gold chain of a myriad links which passed over his shoulder and around his chest, and the curious tattooings that ornamented every square inch of skin, like an exhibition on the walls of Somerset House.

The subject of cookery unavoidably recalls the idea of pancakes. Sages and philologists refer this unpresuming word to a Greek derivation,—*pan,* every, and *kakon,* evil; seeing that in the old Catholic church, before pancakes were frittered down to the rank of common-place nutritives,—one of the results of the Reformation,—it was the custom to set apart a day in the year for the universal shriving of all evil-doers. Upon this solemn occasion,—giving name to Shrove Tuesday,—the sacred elements being more largely partaken than in ordinary, the holy wafer was proportionably expanded; hence the term *pankake,* misspelt *pancake.* Painful as it may be to dissipate the happy dreams of etymologists and antiquaries, truth obliges me to assert that the pancake is an indigenous production of Africa: that, long ere white men tormented and startled the coast with cargoes of civilisation, the wild Akoo, in the recesses of his forest, mingled the flour, the egg, and the honey, fried the savoury compound, and

called it Akar. If he were wise, he added scrapings of citron, and touched each square inch with two fragrant drops from the wounded lime. My authority was an Akoo of frightfully gashed countenance; and, like his countrymen, too sincere a worshipper of the devil to tell a falsehood.

The dinner parties are far from lively. Profusion of viands, fruits, and wine, and a hospitable reception, strive to counterbalance the uniformity of suffocating air and a reunion of the same individuals perpetually repeated. The variegated locust, painted in purple, red, and green, leaping into the soup-plate; the large black cricket plunging into the wine-glass; the fat-bodied mantis plumping into the hot-spiced pepper-pot, which needs no such addition, are novelties; but any charm the novelty may possess soon subsides. Every contrivance to create a cool sensation fails: in vain the refreshing orange and lime flower float in the finger-glass; in vain the water in its porous red-ware jar evaporates, and sprinkles the globular

surface with dew; in vain the claret, Madeira, and sauterne have been for hours exposed to the sea-breeze, the bottles encased in wet cotton and standing in a cooler; heat reigns triumphant, favoured by the cloth clothing ceremoniously worn at such times. Matters of local interest there are none to excite conversation; and, during a great part of the year, arrivals from England are too few to afford new foreign topics. Coffee follows dinner, the horses are ordered, and the guests separate.

Time was when this little white society saw its members creating divisions and cultivating hostilities. Party feeling rose high. Champagne and blood flowed freely, for meetings at the social board led to meetings with hostile intent at the Bullom Shore, which was conveniently situated beyond the range of white man's jurisdiction. Concord, however, having been completely restored, it would not be fair to dwell upon this page of past history.

Annual races in the inclement season of Christmas, when the thermometer stands at 84 deg. in the shade, and rejoicing upon his majesty's birth-day, appear to be the only public amusements : the one exhibiting the fleetness of the beautiful little Arab horse obtained from the Foulahs ; and the other displaying the bravery of the negro soldier in giving a feu de joie, as he discharges his musket with carefully closed eyes. No theatre could be supported ; indeed, no plays could be performed excepting such as contained Othellos or Oronookos only.

Above the flesh market-house, in a most fragrant situation, is the building designed for a ball-room ; use, however, it has none.

The Dignity Balls, so termed upon the "*lucus a non lucendo*" principle of nomenclature, are the sole representatives of civilized dancing. These dignity balls collect whatever rich, whatever respectable, whatever graceful there may be of the softer sex in Freetown. The exact qualification which confers right of *entrée* I could not

hut, his refreshments cooked with European complexity, and his exhibition of massive plate, — sights unusual in the abode of a barbarian chief. The confidence shown by this party in trusting to Dalla Moodie's good faith was esteemed by many an approach towards rashness; at all events, their safe return was deemed a matter of congratulation. But since that event, although so recent, this Bullom had destroyed all the confidence which the British had placed in him, by a dark and suspicious proceeding.

A government *employé*, named Mammadoo (Mahomet), a Foulah by nation, but long attached to the British, had been despatched by his Excellency from Freetown with an official communication to this Bullom chief. Instead of returning, days passed by without Mammadoo's reappearance in the English settlement. Suspicions arose, and a messenger was sent to the Bullom shore to discover the cause of his disappearance. Dalla Moodie denied that Mammadoo had ar-

rived, and pleaded entire ignorance of the mission. When, however, further pressed to declare what had become of the man, he admitted that he had seen the Foulah, who, being charged with carrying on intrigues with different chiefs, had been seized on his arrival at the Bullom shore, and sent as a criminal to Teemba, to be tried for the offence by the Foulah king; and that at the hands, therefore, of the Foulah king he must be sought. Now, as no white man is permitted to reach Teemba, the capital of that jealous nation, the excuse of Dalla Moodie for not restoring the man was liable to considerable suspicion.

Matters stood thus at the time of my residence in Sierra Leone. Perfect uncertainty hung over the fate of the unfortunate Mammadoo. I shall not easily forget the melancholy look and the tears of his young wife, a bead-covered mother scarcely fifteen years of age, who, day after day, sought the houses of those, in authority, to inquire after her hus-

wear down her pale drooping partner,—an easy victory,—and the graceful waltz had followed in its turn; the ladies were enduring the fatigues of refreshment, and the gentlemen were criticising the sable, coffee-coloured, and *aventurine* beauties, who sat round the room in the splendour of contrast between moonbeam drapery and thunder-cloud complexions.

My informant directed the attention of a young officer to a handsome girl at a distance, observing, in an under tone, "You see she is the belle, certainly the most beautiful in the room; would you believe that I once saw her, at a dance, drink off two bottles of ale?"

A voice behind him instantly exclaimed in fury,

"Hear a him! you base man, you curse* me so; big falsehood, you base white man!"

He turned round, and to his dismay discovered that a lady close to him had overheard him, and had gratuitously applied

* "Abuse" or "insult."

the observation to herself. In vain she was assured that he had not dreamed of her, that his remark had referred to a totally different person. She would not be appeased.

"You *did* say 'the most beautiful girl in the room.' I sabby you mean me. I never drink two bottle ale, you bad white man!"

No explanation could soften her wrath. She appealed to a friend near her whether the white gentleman had not used the very words "the most beautiful in the room."

The sex were enraged; perhaps the blow aimed at one hurt many. They grouped together; their several admirers showed symptoms of siding with the injured. The man-of-war's men delighted at the prospect of a general engagement. The innocent cause however of the tumult retired, and since that day has attended no more festivities.

Every one who has seen a favourable specimen of a dignity ball must concede

that it is, in "simple sooth," a striking sight. The dark hue of the dancers, rich as the coating of a black pine-apple; the ostrich and maraboo plumes; satin and embroidery; the unwearied sprightliness and the flexible grace of the dancer; festoons of tropical plants upon the walls; wreaths of orange boughs in full flower; and the long palm-leaves interwoven amongst the compartments, all combine to create a spectacle worthy of being witnessed once in a life-time.

Riding is the most constant and most delightful resource of the white resident. Gorgeous mountain scenery rewards the shortest ride to such as love the picturesque and beautiful; to others, the level race-course always favours an exhilarating gallop. The highways are not adapted for carriages, which are seldom seen. A walk to any considerable distance is nearly impossible, on account of the extreme sultriness of the atmosphere forbidding exertion whilst the sun prevails, and then the total darkness, which almost abruptly

follows its setting: for in the latitude of Sierra Leone dawn and twilight are of a few minutes' duration. The day varies little in length, not more than an hour during the whole year, breaking at half-past five and closing at half-past six. An hour before sunset, the white population is on horseback, cantering to some neighbouring village; visiting King Tom's; loitering on Pa Demba's Road; or climbing the steep to Congo-town, beyond the little mangrove-bordered creek, where legions of land-crabs scamper on all sides at the sound of hoofs; or more generally seeking the race-course for the gallop.

Upon forsaking the European streets of the capital, amusing scenes or droll incidents are certain to occur. Your black tailor, emulous of white aristocracy, thunders by in the pride of a crippled gig and whirlwind horse; the Mahometan gravely utters the salaam aleikum; matrons of the scarcely reclaimed savage leave their hut to behold the white man, and to answer his friendly "How do, maamy?" with a

smile and an uniform "Tankee, daady." Mothers, with infants in their arms or at their backs, were invariably delighted at the salutation "How do, piccaniny?" on passing. They would dance the little black ball, and toss it, and repeat "Tankee-tankee-tankee, daady" until out of hearing. Groups of laughing girls pretend, or more generally feel, alarm at the horse; and, upon its approach, disperse, screaming in real or feigned terror as they run off, constantly turning round their merry faces to grin with glee at the white cavalier. He, if in jocose mood, often spurs the steed and chases the flying nymphs from the road, through garden after garden, until they take refuge in a hut; when once within, they peep coquettishly from behind the mat which serves as a door, and good-humouredly defy further persecution. They are the most light-hearted people upon earth.

When the white man rides by groups in the town, the chance is that he is saluted with a stanza of some favourite

dance-song,* of which he is himself the theme; and which either ludicrously quizzes a personal peculiarity, quotes a burlesque or unwise speech, or connects his name with that of some young Settler or Maroon who is supposed to have fascinated him at the Tallala or Koonking dance.

Few white men arrive in the colony without having a droll "sing" made upon them by these innocent satirists.

The roads are in such miserable state that in most directions a long ride is impracticable. The bridges, too, are formidable to cross. They are ingenious traps, consisting of planks laid side by side upon parallel beams or joists, to which they are fastened by a single nail at each end. Several of these planks are sometimes loose, and it is not unusual for the horse's leg to walk through the gaps between them; much to the amusement of the merry maidens in the brook beneath, who are ever in it, bathing or washing. It is during

* See Chapter xi.

these rides that the customs of the simple natives may be best studied; their actual condition and their precise degree of improvement best observed. Endless variety of small adventure excites and repays interest in the negro race; and I have never returned to the English quarter of the town without a fresh stock of amusing or instructive remembrances.

The ride, however, too often ended painfully; for after having passed through tranquil and contented villages, with the yam-ground, the cassada-fields, plantain and banana plantations dividing each hut, where the man was, perhaps, seen lying upon his palm-rope hammock in some shady place in harmless enjoyment of repose, the mother fondly nursing the child, and the daughters playing their eternal shakee-shakee,* I have re-entered the civilised capital to witness the rum-

* Two small dry gourds, of the size of an orange, containing a few beads and pebbles, are attached to each end of a short piece of twine; by striking them, first over the thumb and then below the hand, a perpetual noise is kept up like that of the castanet

shop collecting round its doors a crowd of disgusting objects: men, newly taught the white man's debasing taste, reeling helplessly; women stretched across the public street in stupor or raving with delirium.

I wish that the blessings of civilisation in Sierra Leone were less largely exhibited in scenes of intoxication.

CHAPTER IX.

LIBERATED POPULATION—*or "Captives."*

NEGROES.

Preponderance of Emancipated Slaves—Low condition—Employments—Gradual Improvement. —Markets.—Barter. —Tribes.—Tattooing and Scars.—Akoos—Their Rebellion.—A Battle.—Victory of the British.—Black Freemasons.—Red Flags.—Papaws—Huts—Ambition.—A Papaw Marriage.—Plighted Vows and a Fracture. —Subserviency of Women. —Betsy Carew. —Earrings, a painful Ornament.—Congo town.—Yaloffs.—Handsome Costume.—"Evil Eye" of Yaloff Maidens.

THE great mass of inhabitants of Freetown, and the entire population of the rest of the Peninsula, with the exception of the managers and missionaries, consists of slaves who have been forcibly rescued from the pestilential confinement of the

slave-ship. It was for the distinct purpose of locating these ill-starred victims to cupidity, when the slave-trade was condemned by the British, that the colony was selected by the Government for their abode as free subjects.

It is still maintained for the same object,* one which reflects more honour on the British name than the conquest of empires.

Into this heterogeneous collection of the freed of many nations are absorbed such of the native inhabitants of Sierra Leone as remained there subject to the English upon its cession by the original Timmanee chiefs, Niambana, Pa Demba, King Tom, and others.

It would not be easy to characterise the entire body of the liberated. As yet, the discordant elements of many savage tribes have not sufficiently amalgamated to permit a general statement applicable to the whole, further than this, that those who have longest dwelt under the advantage

* About thirty-four thousand have been liberated at sea and removed to Sierra Leone.

of good government have lost most of those harsh savage qualities which denote a newly captured slave. Landed, after a voyage of many weeks in the closely packed slave-ship, the "Captives" are taught the mystery of so much clothing as a yard and a quarter of coarse calico may contain. Men receive a plot of ground, a few tools, two-pence a day for a few weeks, and are then left to their own discretion. Many a "Captive" passes his life in the luxury of indolence, sleeping care away in his coarse hammock of palm-rope; many content themselves with devoting a few days' labour to prepare the ground for cassada and cocoa, plantain and earth-nuts, which bountiful Nature generously multiplies into a sufficiency for the year's consumption of the frugal. Some, more active and more wise, in the vicinity of the capital, attend the daily market, bringing tufts of large grass from the mountains for the Freetown mews. Their beaded wives and daughters trip by their side, so many Pomonas, bearing ca-

labashes loaded with rich pines cut by the road-side, the ripe green orange, and mangos, limes, sour sops and sweet sops, earth-nuts and papaws, guavas, water-melons, and other fruits and vegetables of uncouth name to ears born in the temperate zone. As the commodities are brought to suit the taste of the eleven thousand negroes of Freetown, as well as that of the seventy-five whites, productions and manufactured articles uninteresting to the European, or worse, are offered for sale. The n'chock, a vegetable-grease from the butter-tree, red olid palm-oil, used for a similar purpose, and native soap in round dirty balls, are in great request. The principle of barter seems to be innate in the savage, and, I may add, of barter advantageous to themselves. The negro acts upon the maxim of *quid pro quo;* he is with difficulty brought down from his predetermined prices; and cheating is his soul of legitimate business. The market presents a dense assemblage of the naked

and the noisy. Women squat upon the ground in close ranks before their various merchandise, chattering and squabbling from sun-rise till sun-set. Goats and starving pigs wander through the midst, dust thickens the air, and every atrocious species of effluvia that inventive chemistry can create broods over the spot. Such is Freetown market; exhibiting civilisation chiefly in two examples: the occasional use of cotton umbrellas to protect the complexions of the negro women from the sun; and the evident effects of that most enlightened spirit, rum; inebriation being one of the early improvements most successfully introduced amongst the simple blacks by their friend the intellectual white man.

The women are the fishmongers of the town. Their stalls are judiciously confined to a nook by the sea, at the bottom of that deep ravine through which the water, so celebrated for its purity and excellence, is conveyed to a public fountain almost immediately beneath the hot flesh-market.

Here, in the midst of controversy congenial to piscatorial ladies, may be purchased at a trifling sum the sumptuous barracouta of dainty tooth, snappers and ten-pounders, gropers and old-wives, cavallers and jumping-fish, mullets and soles; the last excellent to the white man, but religiously eschewed by the Bullom, on whose shore there is an inexhaustible supply; in a word, all the nutritious productions of the rivers excepting the crocodile and hippopotamus. * There are three kinds of oyster. Those from the Carpenter Rock are a curiosity, the shell being of huge circumference, and the animal itself a supper for a giant; the appetite, however, falls before them, and they are seldom brought to table, unless when disguised in sauce. A diminutive oyster, scarcely larger than a cockle, roughens the shelving rocks in Kroo Bay; and the singular mangrove oyster grows profusely upon the trunk and branches of the tree, which borders the rivers for

* Favourite food with the natives.

miles, to the height of two or three feet from the water, appearing like bands of fungus. They are wholesome, and of rich flavour.

Having once acquired habits of industry and of regular life, together with a practical knowledge of the value of money, the liberated negro and his family will attend the daily market, even when his cottage is at the distance of ten or twelve miles, and be content if at the close of day he returns with the profit of a single "copper."

Some Captives have effectually cast aside their rude habits, have risen far above their fellows, and become useful and industrious workmen. Tailors are found, whose fathers were never troubled with dress; yet whose coat, though not of Stultzian cut, can be worn. Carpenters work more neatly than rapidly; one, to my knowledge, contrived to occupy four days in sawing through a small plank, and charged for labour accordingly. Masons are there, who have the merit, such as it is, of

having erected whatever buildings the capital can boast, and so wisely as to ensure much annual rebuilding.* The Captives are upon the whole an improving class of citizens, and to their rising importance and dawning enterprise we must look for the ultimate welfare of the colony. The whites are too insignificant in numbers, and too migratory, to be considered an important item in the future advancement of the settlement; their tastes and interests lie in England, to which all intend to return before they die. The Kroomen profess no sympathy with others, and are merely a succession of visitors: whilst, of the permanent residents, the Settlers are in the last stage of decay; and such of the Foulahs and Mandingos as are content to dwell here permanently have little stake in a community daily coveting and adopting more and more warmly

* The frequent necessity of rebuilding and of repairs makes house property troublesome. A large house was on this account valued at one and a half year's purchase only, although let to Government on a good lease.

that faith which the Mahometan deems an impassable gulf, cutting off fellow-interest. The Maroons and Liberated alone remain to enlarge and to enjoy the full benefits of this noble district.

The Liberated are collected from innumerable slave tribes around the Peninsula; but, since the exertions to check the slave-trade have nearly annihilated it to the north of Sierra Leone, the greater portion is discovered to belong to the nations of the south, on the Guinea coast, and of the east in the interior. Amongst the principal citizens peopling the "Mountain of Lions," are the Akoo, the Ibbo, the Bassa, the Papaw, the Congo, the Calabar, the Coromantin, and the Bonny.

All land in the colony complete savages, but stronger lines of barbarism seem to mark some than others. The face of the Akoo is gashed deeply in perpendicular lines, leaving cicatrices of a lighter colour. The Ibbos too cut their persons, scoring the face, arms, back, and breast. The countenance of the Bassa is chopped apparently

at random ; and the patterns embossed on the backs of their women are so effectively contrived that the skin projects from the wounds as though skeins of thread were inserted beneath to raise it.

The Akoos have improved ; they furnish good workmen and good servants. Amongst the latter is the major-domo of his Honour, a well-meaning, honest man, whose civilised name, James, is hardly an improvement upon his euphonious native appellation, Soofoola, " My good father." He told me " he wish him can be Christian," by which this pious and constant attendant at chapel simply meant that he had not gone through the sudden and mysterious process of inspiration and conversion in the face of the congregation; an exhibition as startling to strangers, and wholesome to themselves here, as the similar scenes amongst religious sects in England.

The Akoo rebellion, as it has been humorously called, may illustrate some of their feelings.

At about three miles to the east of Freetown lies the fine and salubrious village of Kissey, a name taken from the river from whose banks the first inhabitants had been stolen. After capture having been liberated in Sierra Leone and located here, they assigned the appellation of their lost home to the group of huts which rose around them. Wishing some years since to return to their own country, on the very blameless supposition that being free they might reside where they pleased ; deeming too, perhaps, that they had acquired sufficient knowledge of system and civilisation to ameliorate their own condition and that of their countrymen; they were forcibly detained by the authorities, and were informed that, since the British had taken the trouble and borne the expense of liberating them from the horrors of West Indian slavery, the British had the right of fixing them where most convenient and of enforcing their residence. The Akoos yearned for their native home and their lost friends, and appear to have

suffered acutely the disease of nostalgia, or sickening desire to return to their own country, which strongly affects the negro, sometimes even to death. To the right above mentioned was added might, and from his Excellency proceeded an order forbidding the Akoo to leave his town, or certain boundaries closely marked round it, on any account whatever. It so happened that this improving little colony contained several artisans of fair acquirements and good conduct, to whom the village had not offered sufficient scope or employment. Some of them were engaged in day-work in the capital and its neighbourhood, and foolishly enough had the simplicity to proceed as usual to the daily work on which their families depended for support, even after the manifesto had been issued. Alas! it is evil to defy the laws; and the Akoos, captured upon their way to work, were wholesomely lodged in the gaol. The Akoos, determined henceforth to abandon the advantages of colonial superintendence, and to

seek the place of their birth at all hazards, left Kissey in a body, and sought the paths which led through the almost impenetrable bush.

The paternal eye of the Governor had perceived the intention of these unwise people to divest themselves of his anxious solicitude for their welfare, and he despatched troops to restore the wandering sheep to the fold with all promptness and military gentleness. The hostile bands met. Fight-palaver ensued. The Government soldiers charged like warriors intent upon salutary carnage; the rebels fought with courage worthy a better cause; and, when the trumpet sounded a parley and cessation from deeds of slaughter, the losses in the action were discovered to be a Government drummer-boy killed, and several, that is to say, four old Akoo women taken prisoners of war.*

The Akoos, "when at home," practise orgies of a direful nature, probably similar

* Such is the substance of the various legends which were extant in Sierra Leone. I vouch not.

to the terrific Purrah of the Timmanees, and the Semo of the Soosoos. Soofoola was not to be induced, by entreaty or bribery, to disclose the mysteries into which he had been initiated when young: my cogent curiosity to learn the details was met by his saying,—

"My own father ask, me no can't tell him: me tell, me die."

Although a professed convert and a zealous, to Christian doctrine, his spirit could not shake off the impressions of his earlier years, but remained spell-bound by this atrocious Pagan-craft. The institution seemed to be based upon imperfect principles of justice and retribution; the "old man," or grand master of the secret ceremonies, whom he shuddered to name, evidently possessed, as in the analogous societies of other tribes, the power of life and death over the members, and even of inflicting summary punishment on others who intruded on the holy precincts of the grove, or who committed offences against the community in general. In Sierra Leone,

although there have been Bundoo houses for the singular freemasonic rites of the women, neither the Akoo, Timmanee, nor Soosoo unite in the secret fraternities so common and so fearful without the immediate bounds of the colony. The red flag upon the house-thatch, denoting in the native towns deprecation of Satanic visits, are the principal marks of Paganism openly vaunting in the Christian settlement. They glitter in great numbers in the villages near Freetown, but often simply imply that the house over which they float is dedicated to matters over which Satan rejoices in his heart, although not specially practised as sacred to him.

The Papaws of Freetown are unobtrusive, unsophisticated people, living together in wattled huts, mudded, and covered with a thatch of dry boughs. Such, indeed, is the construction of by far the greater portion of the metropolis, containing a semi-barbarous population of several thousands, and exhibiting the most abject apologies for human habitations in

close contact with the airy and well-planned mansions of the European. Few impulses, however, appeared to excite the "Captive" to labour and profitable exertion, so much as the desire of building a substantial dwelling in European style for himself and his family; and, in the midst of circular mud hovels, the occasional sight of stone walls rising upon a regular plan, and even of finished stone houses with windows and doors, furnished evidence to the wide step which has been made in the path of improvement by the once savage owners.

In the hut of a Freetown Papaw I have beheld a painfully ludicrous mixture of advancement and barbarism.

One object of growing ambition in the Captive is, to be married at church. In the present instance, Pokkaloo and his Maybooka had perpetrated the marriage vow at the church with due solemnity, after having already lived together as man and wife in "country fashion" for several years. But although by their native cus-

toms indissolubly united, church solemnity was coveted for various weighty reasons. Upon this red-letter day, the bridegroom would enjoy the privilege of wearing a blue coat and white trousers, not to mention a hat and an umbrella; the whole being let out to hire for such occasions. The dark-eyed bride, too, sighed for the moment when she might borrow, for a few "lilly coppers," the old muslin gown and sky-blue beaver hat, together with a pair of shoes; for upon the wedding-day alone does vanity of dress burn forth with European ardour. Amused at the sight of the espoused returning from church,— the bride supporting with pride the agony of pinching shoes, on feet which never before or since wore any; the smart, happy bridegroom, striding far before his spouse, and protecting his complexion with the huge green borrowed umbrella, too much absorbed in his own aristocratic state to spare a thought upon the limping lady behind,—I felt anxious to witness their home-scene. An officer

of a brig-of-war lying in the anchorage, and a gentleman of much Colonial popularity, joined in a ride to their dwelling; and we proceeded to swell the number of friends at this jocund bridal party, bearing a bottle of Madeira as an introduction, and as our contribution to the wedding-feast. Within the enclosure surrounding the hut were sundry personages busy in preparation. Cackling fowls were expiating with their heads the voracious appetites of the wedded and their friends; pigs, apparently of wet parchment strained over a frame-work of bone, hung from the palisades in the calm repose of death; fish was proclaiming to the olfactories of distant suburbs the coming festivity; calliloo was sodden; millet and fat were boiling for the famous but over-bilious kuskusoo; ochro abounded; rice was pounding; earth-nuts were roasting; and mouths were watering at the bountiful bowls crimson with palm-oil, the negro "Kitchener's" zest. We advanced in friendly frankness. At a rude table sat

the bridegroom and four friends, grave as if at a funeral. They were unclothed; the hat, the coat, and the trousers were gone. Alas! the umbrella-hour was past, never to return. "Ichabod! Ichabod! my glory is departed!" exclaimed the melancholy countenance of Pokkaloo as distinctly as a countenance could exclaim. "My friend," cried one of our party, presenting the wine, "we come to wish you happiness; to drink to your health and the health of your bride; and we trust you will not refuse to sip to ours in this good Madeira."

Our reception was anything but cordial. Gloom and silence chilled our hearts. But the bride was absent; and, for long, inquiry was made for her in vain. After many entreaties to be permitted to offer congratulations, one of the black man's friends left the hovel, and returned with the happy wife. Her countenance was in sorrow and in anger. Alas! who can tell the brief, brief joys of matrimony? She entered scowling at her husband; her

wedding-garment had returned to the lender, and had been succeeded by the habitual stripe of cotton round the loins; but upon its white were drops of gore. The truth flashed upon us. An early exercise of marital authority had inflicted a blow which had crushed the thick cartilage occupying the place of a nose in the negro face. Bliss had vanished; clouds were lowering over them; and we left the newly married to all their luxury of connubial strife. After all, there is little in the marriage vow to guarantee kindness from the husband, who pledges himself at the altar, not to "love, honour, and cherish," but to "lop, bother, and perish,"—a style of perverted phrase which makes a negro wedding anything but a grave performance.

Despotism over the gentler sex is an attribute of the African. To raise women from the state of contempt and degradation in which they are held, will be one of the difficult tasks in the civilisation of the Liberated. They still act as slaves to their lords, excepting in few instances; and

undergo those labours which are interesting in poetry and in the landscape only: bearing the heavy calabash of water from the spring; pounding the rough rice with long weighty poles; and with children tied to their back, toiling in the preparation of the ground for seed-time. In this treatment they may not themselves detect degradation, since habit and education cause the evil to sit lightly upon them; and the gentle and mild nature of the sex, as inherent in the sable as in the fair, may suppress murmur: but the time should come when the influence of the whites will be directed to raise the too-submissive negress. The recognition of unjust contempt may be awakened in Freetown more speedily than in the rural districts of Sierra Leone.

Every country and age produce some remarkable woman. This is the case with Sierra Leone at the present day; for, although the party moves in a humble sphere, her name is famous on the spot, and deserves wider celebrity.

Mrs. Carew, or "Betsy Crew," was brought to Freetown some years ago, a wretched slave captured in a slave-ship. Without the faintest dream of civilised society, without connexions, without knowledge of the English tongue, and possessing no resources but her own industry and talent, this remarkable woman has risen to opulence, owning landed and house property, and having a considerable interest in shipping; and even takes the whole army and navy contracts for provisioning the troops and the men-of-war, giving ample security doubtless. Feeling in her own case the disadvantage of want of education, she has placed her son in a school of high respectability in London. I was informed that she had suffered a severe loss by the sinking of a vessel, whose cargo, her property, was uninsured; but that she bore the reverse cheerfully, preferring to comfort herself with the good which she retained, rather than to grieve for what she had lost. In one respect Betsy is a laudable example to

many a Freetown dame of loftier lineal pretensions. Her large family are pledges of marriage fidelity more praiseworthy than common; for "country marriages," so called, a civil contract of simple assent between the couple, without registering-fee, is considered by many as most expedient. This "country marriage" implies inviolable union and constancy to the end of life, but without the seemly and graceful sanction of the Honourable and Reverend the Colonial Chaplain. One excuse is, that of a marriage rite some have never heard; another, that being Pagans they may dispense with Christian ceremonies.

Mrs. Carew, having been mentioned, must be described. Her beauty is all of internal quality. Externally is beheld a very obese and a very smiling woman, round wherever rotundity in the human figure is possible; the gibbous jet face, large and shining, is surmounted by the lace of a smart cap; the head is further adorned with a red kerchief; and perched

aloft, to crown the whole, is a sky-blue beaver Welsh hat. Her ear is loaded with many pendents of various dimensions, dragging that useful appendage towards the shoulder as to a resting-place, and stretching the originally small perforation to a wide chasm. Her gown is of a tasteful pattern; and from beneath it peeps the wonted skirt of bright yellow "duckas," or dorcas, an under-garment of woollen considered so ornamental that a portion is always allowed to show itself as if by accident. The heavy cotton umbrella, whose weight is more oppressive than the heat which it may ward off, is of course in Betsy's hand; and, as she grasps it, rings are perceived glancing upon her fingers. If this interesting woman has vanity, it is in her earrings; an ornament worshipped in perfect consistency by the savage, who makes an incision or bores a hole through the flesh of the ear from which to suspend it, upon precisely the same principle as that which prompts her to gash her face, and tear her back, shoulders,

and bosom, with a thousand beautiful wounds.

To the black belle no metal finery comes amiss. I saw one woman, adorned simply enough in other respects, with an iron ring through the ear, loaded with drops of gold filigree-work, cornelian pendents, silver rings, a half-penny, a six-pence, two penny-pieces, and an old rusty iron key; which comfortable collection distended the orifice so widely that two fingers might have been inserted into it. The other ear had been more loaded or less strong: the cartilage had given way, and two long flaps were hanging down in unhappy separation; proving how much a lady will dare in pursuit of splendour.

At some distance from Kroo-town, already described, upon a sharp ascent, is the principal collection of Congos, called Congo-town. The natives of Congo are so well known in the West-India Islands, where they form a large part of the slave population, as to need no lengthened notice. Like nearly all the slave tribes to

the south of Sierra Leone, they occupy a low grade in the human family; but, transplanted into the English free settlement, they acquire habits of industry and a taste for the more rational employment of life. Their village is picturesque, clean, and quiet; indeed, the cleanliness of every town in the colony might be imitated with advantage by the more refined of our own country. The huts are, as usual, separated by cultivated ground and wooded with fruit-trees. Although comparatively far from the sea, I have watched the steady labour of a boat-builder planking his boat firmly and accurately; how it would be conveyed through the village and to the water was a mystery to me. A dozen Kroomen, perhaps, would carry it upon their shoulders for a copper or two. Of all the suburbs of Freetown, my eye always rested upon Congo-town as the most pleasant and least barbarous.

The Yaloffs* must not be forgotten in a description of the capital, few in num-

* Pronounced Jolliff.

ber and unimportant though they be. The nation lies to the north of Sierra Leone, and borders upon the Gambia; they are to that settlement what the Bulloms and Timmanees are to Sierra Leone. Such as dwell under British government are chiefly voluntary colonists. They are immediately distinguished from the common herd of savage tribes by the addition they make to the varied costume of Freetown. The women, generally tall and stately, are sometimes enveloped in a white mantilla of great length, passing over one shoulder under the other, and cast a second time over the person. They throw infinite grace into the ever-changing falls of their mantillas, constantly lengthening or shortening the drapery, folding it first on one side, then on the other, and playing with its arrangement as they walk.

Whether from superstition or jealousy, or from both, a power of "evil eye" is attributed to the Yaloff maidens by the less captivating of other tribes. Our own English annals of witchcraft, by no means

slender, shrink to nothing in comparison with the perpetual despotism of witches and wizards amongst the blacks. Some amusing examples of their slavery to belief in sorcery occurred to my own experience both in Sierra Leone and in the country of the Timmanees; and in due place it will be seen how marvellously a white man may discover that he possesses powers of spell and devilry, of which in his own sceptical land he had been altogether unconscious. In the present instance, the "white man" had the benefit of a warning. Hagar Achem, the religious young Settler girl, would occasionally assume the privilege of admonition and exhortation when at my abode in quality of laundress. One day, having spoken much and strenuously in favour of "God-palaver" and of kidnapping, she had glanced from the instructive to the gay, and dilated upon the approaching festivity of a dignity ball; from dignity balls she had diverged to the subject of the last Koonking, the dance of the Settler girls,

and in connexion with this had introduced anecdotes of sundry graceful dancers who enjoyed local renown. Amongst the rest was Felicity, a remarkably fine Yaloff. Hagar, the Settler, confessed "Felicity handsome too much, grand eye, tall too much." "But," quoth Hagar with a shudder, "Felicity Yaloff girl; Yaloff girl can kill; white man speak to Yaloff girl; she follow him; he no can see her; she see him; see him in day, see him in night; where he live she live too. White man grow sick too much, no sabby why for. Yaloff girl laugh. He grow sick, and sick, and pale, and then he die."

Canidia was without doubt a Yaloff, although Horace neglected to state the fact.

In dismissing the subject of Freetown and its diversified population, the vast number of languages spoken by its citizens may be noticed. English, or rather a jargon compounded of English and barbarous roots, is the medium of communi-

cation only when the native languages of the interlocutors are dissimilar. The negroes are gifted with a power of acquiring languages in an incredibly short space of time, many days are not required to enable them to become intelligible in a foreign tongue, and when acquired it is not soon forgotten. An instance of this glossarial talent will be found in old Ali Mamee Caba, King of Rokel.* The Settlers claim descent from the Sherbro-Bulloms, and speak Bullom. The Foulahs salute in Arabic, and can frequently converse in the same language. The Timmanees are the most populous and powerful of the neighbouring nations, and Timmanee is spoken in Freetown.

The utter want of analogy, even in radicals, between the vocabularies of the innumerable African tribes has puzzled linguists. The following modes of salutation, which may be addressed to a stranger in Freetown by five successive negroes as

* Chapter xix.

they pass, will serve as an example of the variety of tongues common in this African Babel.*

Timmanee,	Kurio ya.	Ans.	Bāh.
Soosoo,	Ў' māmā?		M' m̃āmā.
Bullom,	Lemmu.		Umba.
Akoo,	Aou-jeery.		Annea-loun laoo.
Mandingo,	Salaam aleikum		Alaiku salaam.

* For the numerals, &c. of these five tribes, vide Appendix No. I.

CHAPTER X.

COURT OF JUSTICE.

TRIAL BY A JURY OF NEGROES.

A close Carriage.—The Judge about to be hanged.—A Mistake.—Court-house.—Banna, the Kidnapper.—Interpretation.—King Tom's Oath.—An Execution.—A Prophecy.—The Rusty Sword.—Lucid Police Order.—Crimes amongst Savages.—Freetown Gaol.—Galley Slaves.

"Happy child! to have escaped an experiment!"

Godolphin, vol. ii.

A TRIAL by a jury of negroes! The idea was a new one and a droll, but was put into my head by his Honour the Chief Justice upon the morning after my arrival.

The calendar was heavy, containing two capital offences; one a case of kidnapping, the other of wounding with in-

tent to murder. The civil side promised an interesting explanation, in mitigation of damages, why a certain white gentleman had broken his friend's right arm, with said friend's own ruler at said friend's own table in said friend's own house.

It was a favourable opportunity for a white man, fresh from white man's land, to make acquaintance with his many coloured fellow-subjects, who, delighting in controversy which they cannot comprehend, carried on in a language which few understand, listen in attentive curiosity to his Honour's charge, the pleadings of counsel, and the eloquence of the interpreter; a dark gentleman who, with laudable impartiality, baffles the polyglot proficiency of both whites and blacks.

Wholesome ceremony elevates the most trivial matters, and renders solemn proceedings more solemn. His Honour upholds the dignity of the judicial office, and diffuses salutary awe over the subsequent proceedings, by rolling in state

to church to hear the assize sermon; the horses slowly pacing with becoming seriousness, in order to prolong to the astonished multitude the phenomenon of a frothy and flowing wig, and heavy scarlet robe; a show of pomp astounding to the hundreds, who deem that a piece of cotton is as much as Nature needs, and more than she asks for.

"The world," cried Alexander the Great, "can have but one sun." Sierra Leone, with its twenty towns, had once but one close carriage—that of a Chief Justice. In former years, a predecessor had appeared in Freetown; but, being found altogether unsuited to the close and sultry climate, it was laid aside as useless. Means of rendering it valuable to the community at large were suggested, the suggestion was adopted; and from that time, until it disappeared through the joint efforts of cockroaches and bug-a-bugs, the close carriage was employed to convey criminals from the gaol in the town to the gallows-tree upon the Barrack Hill; until at length

inevitable execution was associated with the sight of a close carriage in the minds of the black populace.

When a certain Chief Justice, therefore, first entered close carriage the second,* to proceed to church in due state, swarms pressed around the vehicle; every street offered its copious contribution of curly heads and grinning teeth: the report spread "White man, him go for be hanged! White man, him go for gallows!" The young brown ladies flew to their toilette (for they always carefully deck themselves in holiday dress for chapel or an execution); and even the grave Mahometan bent his course to Golgotha without the city, troubling the grace of his flowing robe with unseemly haste, his heart rejoicing at the annihilation of the Giaour Cadi. Alas! that so many should be disappointed; the

* I cannot assert the exact truth of this anecdote. It has been stated, and it has been denied. It is too good to be omitted, and will serve as a specimen of Freetown gossip.

truth by degrees became known. The inhabitant of the close carriage had come to gratify them with executions, when necessary, but never *in propriâ personâ*.

Fortified with this "leetle anecdote," I felt some interest in beholding his Honour enter the chariot, and linger in the street to church; the length of journey being about fifty yards, and the progress occupying at least ten good minutes. The generous steeds, kicking the dust and trampling the indigo, were cautiously held in by the black major-domo, who for the first time had his long-aspiring ambition to drive, gratified. Seated upon the box, and grappling the reins with both hands, and those apparently too few for the struggle, he fixed his rapturous eye, now upon the church, towards which he advanced by many a tack, now upon the steeds, now full of complacency upon the gazing multitude. His livery consisted of light loose trousers and open shirt; and his Akoo visage, tattooed and gashed perpendicularly after the fashion of his tribe,

scowled beneath the wide flapping brim of a tenpenny grass hat. No shoulder-knot, no brocade and tassels, no three-cornered hat, no portly stomach graced with a nosegay, announced the judicial coachman; but he drove like a negro, taking anything but his rest, with a partial clothing round him. Happily, a tumultuous posse of a hundred ragged Ebonites, under the title of constables, were interested in the safety of the judge. Four of them, with courage unusual in a negro, seized the steeds; and, after many fruitless attempts, succeeded in conducting their charge to the church-door, a co-operation which received small thanks from the indignant coachman.

Few of the many accompanied his Honour into the church; they repaired, dusty, chattering, and curious, to the Court-house, awaiting with becoming impatience the opening of the commission.

Meanwhile, cooling myself with that delicious freezing mixture sangaree, in a verandah overlooking the wide Atlantic

and wooed by its luxurious breezes, adjusting a cloth coat, dignified and uncomfortable substitute for the unceremonious loose jean jacket, and selecting a grass hat of portentous brim, I summoned courage to take umbrella and effect a sultry transit to the Court-house.

This is a heavy building, at the west and least fashionable end of Freetown, beyond the brook which supplies the inhabitants with water; cleansing the unclean who bathe in it, and quenching the thirst of the thirsty. The bulk of the edifice is appropriated to the confinement of prisoners, and is in fact the metropolitan gaol. Passing through a gateway, the visitor gains a large space girt with high walls, and in the centre stands the black depôt for criminals and criminated. When he enters the door, he is instantly greeted with the sound of chains; chains being in considerable repute in the free colony of Sierra Leone. He ascends three or four stories by a broad staircase, with tiers of cells on either hand strongly barred and

bolted. Immediately under the roof, on the very uppermost story, is a spacious room, covering the whole area of the building. A dim heated atmosphere stagnates in the Hall of Justice; carbon from the lungs of hundreds repels intrusion: the eye, after some time, penetrates the cloud. Upon rows of benches are huddled together men, women, and children; discovering every degree and extent of blackness, every degree from that of printer's ink to that of cocoa-nut, every extent from the human face and hands divine to the whole unadorned person.

Affixed to the eastern wall stands a kind of counter of common wood, painted lead-colour; behind which lead-coloured counter are perceived the Judge and his assistants, "a terrible show." On either side of his Honour is seen an honourable member of Council as assessor; now holding judicial office, but out of court discharging some other honourable function, as storekeeper or auctioneer. Above the three dignities, in painful majesty, frowns

the apparition of a Roman lictor's axe and bundle of rods; a most appropriate device for the classic negroes.* How can crime brave such an apparatus! Yet it is braved, as will speedily be seen. To the right of the judgment-seat are twelve gentlemen attentively listening; they are negroes and jurymen. Opposite to these woolly-haired gentlemen of the jury are gentlemen not of the jury, whether fair or sable, European or African, who have come from mere curiosity.

The trial was for a capital offence, more commonly practised in Freetown than detected, and one altogether unknown in perhaps every other British possession, —that of stealing a free boy, a liberated slave or "King's boy," and attempting to carry him across the river to be sold as a slave to the Bulloms.

When I entered the court, the evidence

* Perhaps adopted in accordance with Von Müller's theory, to alarm the modern Carthaginian Foulahs with the emblem of ancient Roman castigation.

for the prosecution had commenced. In front of his Honour, and separated by a table surrounded by dark-complexioned counsel, lazily leaning upon the railing of the bar, stood a creature whose appearance alone excited a pity almost amounting to favour in those who were unused to similar scenes. A heavy thing, formed like a young man, excepting in the face, whose outline was that of a baboon,—no forehead, no prominence of nose, but a formidable protrusion of mouth, with a countenance bespeaking ignorance of his situation or apathy—such a being was standing upon the question of life or death.

A witness was called. He gave evidence that on a certain day Banna, the prisoner, had been detained in a canoe upon the river, in company with a Mandingo, having the boy in his possession, perfidiously entrapped and forcibly detained. The boy stated his case, of which this was the substance; adding, from various reasons, the distinct certainty of the object of his detention, and enumerating many cruel-

ties practised upon him to secure his concealment, such as compelling him to lie at the bottom of the canoe, and covering him with sail-cloths loaded with stones.

The first witness I heard called was a negro, who could not speak a syllable of English. "What is your name?" inquired the counsel; no answer was given. Uprose the interpreter, a civil, well-meaning black, but no great linguist. The question was now put in one of the twenty languages current in Freetown. When the name had been ascertained, his notion of an oath was sought, and, as might be expected, none was discovered. In vain the counsel spoke of heaven and of hell; in vain the Chief Justice queried as to truth and its reward, and untruth and its punishment.

"Where will you go when you die?"

The interpreter, having exchanged words with the witness, gave back as answer:

"That man (pointing to witness) can say, him go in ground when him die."

"Ay; but ask him where he will go if he tell a lie."

Interpreter.—" That man can say, him go in ground."

" But, after he is in the ground, where will he live ?"

Interpreter.—" That man can say, him dead, him no live."

" Ask him if he will kiss this book ?" handing a closed volume, which might have been the Testament or Childe Harold.

Interpreter.—" That man say, him can kiss book."

" Ask him what the book is ?"

Interpreter.—" He say, he no sabby the book."

" Why, then, did he offer to kiss the book ?"

Interpreter.—" He say, he can kiss book."

" Ask if in his own country there exists any ceremony by which he would feel himself bound to tell the truth ?"

This was a long sentence to be interpreted; and the interpreter, having paused

to consider, exchanged a word or two with the witness, and then said,

"He say, him can tell truth."

Witness descended from the box unquestioned as to evidence, being lamentably ignorant of the force of an English oath. His sole excuse was, that he had never before heard of it, nor comprehended it now.

"Call the next witness—King Tom."

King Tom came forward; a tall, upright, splendid form. He was a Krooman by nation, and wore the sparing loin-cloth; the utmost an independent Kroo will yield to the exacting modesty of the whites. His majesty spoke the usual English of the place, that *lingua Franca* of the blacks sometimes well termed the talkee-talkee language.* Few of the barbarous African

* A portion of the New Testament has been translated, or, as it might be more properly called, travestied, into the talkee-talkee, for the benefit of the negroes. Let all beware how they look into its pages, who would not connect ludicrous associations with the sacred text.

tribes possess a form of oath; of these few are the remarkable inhabitants of the Kroo coast. King Tom was sworn; first, according to the Kroo rite, and next, to make assurance doubly sure, upon the English Testament. After putting himself into various dignified attitudes, King Tom drew himself to his full height. An officer of the court approached him, bearing a paper containing salt. Tom extended his hand, and having placed the tip of his finger to his tongue, took up upon it a portion of the sacred article. He paused: raising his eyes to heaven, he slowly pointed his salted finger upwards, at the utmost perpendicular stretch of his arm; then stooping, he steadfastly looked upon the ground, mingling its dust with the salt: lastly, with solemn visage and demeanour, he put to his tongue the imprecatory mixture. Not a word was spoken. He had probably dedicated himself to the powers above and below. His truth was now inviolable. Death would not have conquered his veracity.

But form required that he should now kiss the Bible; and this he did to the edification of the spectators. Its contents he did not understand, and if he had understood them he would have scoffed. No Krooman has ever been known to become a convert to Christianity, and I believe this tribe alone have to a man withstood the efforts of the Missionaries.

It is painful to witness the perversion of a sacred ceremony into a farce. If the sanction of his country's oath bound King Tom, why need more? The second rite no more affected his truth, or touched his conscience, than would kissing the Koran, or placing the hand under the thigh, or tasting the Kroo salt and dust, in the case of an English witness. The form however is established, and all must obey.

King Tom's evidence went clearly to the facts. The prisoner continued leaning upon the bar, apparently heedless of the whole affair. When informed by the interpreter that he might examine the witness, he muttered something unintelli-

gible, and King Tom left his temporary elevation to remingle in the crowd.

The next witness spoke in a tongue singularly "unknown." The interpreter confessed himself foiled; no one comprehended. His Honour, at length, addressing Grand Jury, Petty Jury, Honourable Members of Council, and the swarm of hearers at large, begged to know whether any one in the Court could speak the witness's language.

"Conticuere omnes, intentique ora tenebant."

At last there arose a black gentleman in blue, who observed, "Me can sabby what dat man can talk;" and thus were the ends of justice satisfactorily fulfilled. One difficulty was passing strange,—that of understanding the interpreter himself; and on one occasion the Chief Justice was actually forced to express a desire that some person would interpret the interpretation.

Poor Banna was called upon for his defence, and to show reason why sentence

of death should not be pronounced. This startling demand being explained, the unfortunate creature thrust forward his semi-human head, and burst forth into a perfect hurricane of words. His energy of action and violent torrent of language were appalling, nor did he appear to intend a conclusion; but foaming at the mouth, and convulsively clasping his hands, (*horresco referens!*) he continued uttering what seemed to be one crowded and endless sentence. When with difficulty his speech was checked, the interpreter was desired to give the meaning. This useful functionary, loving to condense, or perhaps eschewing literal translation, summed up the prisoner's defence in few words: "Dat man," pointing to the miserable naked object, "dat man say him all lie-palaver; boy come to canoe for go to Aberdeen; him no sell him." He was condemned. Sentence of death was likewise passed upon the negro who had attempted murder; having in a

fit of jealousy wounded a young woman severely, though, owing to the interference of a constable, not fatally.

At the place of execution each spoke long and loudly, rending the air with their cries and appealing to the spectators for sympathy. Each having failed in his attempt, considered himself innocent of the crime. The one had not sold the boy, for the boy had been rescued; the other had not killed the woman, because after several weeks of dangerous illness she had recovered; and, strangely enough, most of the spectators are said to have felt as the criminals did, and to have considered their sentence harsh, although the evidence against them had been incontrovertible, and perfectly conclusive. Immediately before execution, the murderer turned round towards Government House, waving his hand at it in a dignified and threatening manner; he apostrophised the Governor who was at the moment in all probability enjoying a sound sleep, the hour being half-past five in the morning.

"Gobberna! Black man go for die; he no kill; Gobberna kill black man; rain come, black man die; rain done go, Gobberna die; Gobberna see black man again."* Hereupon arose an expectation amongst the negroes that the Governor would die after the rainy season according to the prophecy at the gallows. Such a belief was expressed in my hearing. The Governor, unhappily did die at the close of the rains.

The courts were my first introduction to a concourse of free blacks, and it was a painful one. Decorous behaviour and perfect stillness prevailed, and alone caused a favourable impression. A want of dignity marred the proceedings. The purpose was understood by the audience; but into the principles of justice, and the system of law, they could not enter. Owing to the complete novelty of a trial by jury to those who try criminals by the ordeals of "red-water"—boiling oil, and

* Not having witnessed the execution, I give the story as related to me.

red-hot iron only; owing also to the great confusion of languages spoken in Freetown, and the small knowledge of that in which the proceedings are conducted;* many ludicrous though melancholy scenes have broken in upon the gravity of the court. Every sitting will, however, lessen the evil, and enhance the value of a verdict founded upon evidence; already, the Settlers and the Maroons, and many of the older and best educated of the Liberated, seem to enter fully into the spirit of impartial investigation.

In the year 1830, a man, who spoke no European language but Spanish, and who was entirely ignorant of English forms and ceremonies, was placed at the bar upon a charge of murder. It was the custom to draw from its scabbard a huge sword of justice,—an imposing performance. The atmosphere of Sierra Leone is lamentably damp, and the sword had become rusty, and, being rusty, was not

* Like the Norman-French of the early English courts.

easily induced to leave its case. Many vigorous attempts were made. One stout negro held the scabbard, another tugged at the hilt. These alarming preparations were narrowly watched by the trembling prisoner. At last, out flew the blade, and up sprang the criminal screaming *Misericordia! misericordia!* and struggling to escape. He expected nothing short of instant decapitation; and some time passed before he could be comforted with the assurance that the gallows, and not the sword, awaited him.

His Honour, the present Chief Justice, has the satisfaction of being esteemed and respected by both colours. Time was when the dignity of the judicial robe was hurt in being worn by a worthy gentleman who combined in his own person the rather uncongenial offices of colonial chief justice, apothecary, colonial secretary, judge of the vice-admiralty, and colonial surgeon.

There exists a lower tribunal of justice, the Police-office, where cognizance is

taken of petty offences. A chief magistrate sits with extensive powers. The process of allegation and defence in this court baffles description; the parties being the most degraded and ignorant of the blacks, who plead each his or her own cause, with great flow of words, in an unintelligible patois. Kept in countenance by two volumes of Blackstone's Commentaries on the right hand, and two upon the left of his desk, the worthy police magistrate hears and decides. Once a decision was given in this office worthy of immortality. The charge against the culprit was that of having set on fire his master's house; which being disproved, the defendant was disposed of thus:

"As it appears that there is no proof whatever against the prisoner,—Ordered, *therefore,* that he be committed to gaol as a rogue and vagabond for six months."*

It is interesting to inquire into the number and quality of offences committed

* Vagrancy and roguery, however, had no doubt been proved.

by a population in a state of transition from barbarism to civilisation. The enactments of the British penal code prove the multiplicity of crimes which flourish where education flourishes. Many of these are the results of an artificial state of society, and could have no possible existence where the civil relations are different from our own. The more complicated and numerous the bonds which attach man to man, the greater choice and greater facility are offered for breaking through some of them. The vices of the savage are few and prominent; and excepting where an adventitious impulse stimulates to offence, as in the case of a premium for bartering slaves, the wants are too simple, and contentment is too genuine, to make injuries between neighbours frequent. In this state of independence, it will hereafter be seen that their penal code recognises four crimes only: and where every punishment is obviously to the advantage of the authorities, inasmuch as the condemned is sold and they

receive the price, if only *four* offences are comprehended in the statutes of a nation, it is most reasonable to suppose that few others are committed. Of these, one alone, murder, is brought into a British criminal court. "Curse-palaver," or "sauce-palaver," meaning abuse, incurring capital punishment amongst the savage tribes of Africa, is placed in England amongst the civil cases; and "witch-palaver," or witchcraft, and "woman-palaver," or adultery, are entirely omitted in the list of civilized crimes in our statute law.

The black colonists of Freetown, therefore, would not much trouble the gentlemen of the sable jury, did they learn the virtues without the evils of their white protectors: but unluckily, if frailty did not ever accompany excellence in the world, men might forget that they were human.

Acquiring new tastes, placed in situations of temptation, thrown amongst the least improving of the whites, and, above all, taught the fascinations of intemper-

ance, the negro of Sierra Leone loses that ignorance which has alone limited his vice. At the same time, it fortunately happens that small scope is given him in committing crimes: his wants, although increased, are still humble; and offences against property are seldom great, where all possess a sufficiency.

The black population of Freetown in May 1834 amounted to between ten and eleven thousand, and the gaol contained seventy-four criminals only; comprehending all who were awaiting trial, and all who were suffering under actual sentence of imprisonment. Theft, a crime to be expected where knowledge of the principle of property is in its infancy, is the most frequent sin, and the Kroomen are the chief sinners. Sixteen debtors were in confinement, not owing sums to the fashionable amount of thousands, which might lead to an honourable composition with creditors and secure personal freedom, but sundry ignoble cut-monies and dollars. The most offensive sight in Si-

erra Leone was that of the criminals driven as galley-slaves to the public works. They are fastened together in strings by chains, and are compelled to labour on the roads and at the bridges. Nothing so forcibly conveys the idea of cruelty as fetters. Habit may reconcile the eye to the frequent spectacle; but I cannot say that I remained sufficiently long in the colony to acquire a happy indifference.

CHAPTER XI.

BLACK PREACHERS AND NEGRO EDUCATION.

African taste for Oratory.—Sects.—Reverend Pilot and Reverend Blacksmith.—A Simile.—Sunday in Freetown.—Battle of Epithets.—Ride to Uncle Dickey's Chapel.—Panegyric upon Uncle Dickey by an Enthusiast.—A Grass-house.—The Service and Sermon-Eloquence.—Expounding.—A Negro's account of Melchizedec.—False Grounds for encouraging ignorant Preachers.—Schools.—Game at Infant Baptism.—Missionaries.—Negro Literature.—Paternal Stimulus.—State of the Press.

Negroes are eloquent by nature. In a town in one of their own independent territories I have heard the plaintiff and the defendant at the gate of judgment each speak energetically for upwards of an hour, and the learned judge, Ansumana Daboo, give his profound decision in an

harangue of equal length. The rule by which their oratory seemed to be guided was a sensible one,—the less matter and the fewer topics, the more necessity for words. It is no wonder that when zeal induces the white Missionary to appoint black chaplains over rising flocks, the pulpit should be hailed as a fine field for oratorical display. Of the negro colonists scarcely any frequent the English church; the exceptions are the household servants of white residents, a sprinkling of soldiers, and the children of the schools. The reason is, perhaps, that the quiet mode of conducting public worship, and the sermon unexciting and deliberately read, have no attractions for the enthusiast, whose hot spirit revels in the cayenne and ginger of theological controversy.

The Settlers are religious, and chiefly Independents, or members of "Lady Hunting Tom's Collection;" and their principal pastors are both worthy ones, Prince Stober, a pilot, and Perry Locks. Prince Stober is a man of acute and cultivated

mind, of good phrase and address, held in deserved reverence by his people and in much respect by the Europeans. He once had the advantage of an excellent colleague; but fate ordained a disagreement which terminated, rather humorously, in abrupt variance. Thus it fell. Some matter of controversy chancing to be "to the fore," in presence of the assembled congregation, the reverend pilot carried on his side the approbation of the hearers. Thereon his friend, stung with distress, taunted the reverend pilot with pursuing mercenary concerns on the Lord's Day, in as much as he had been guilty of piloting vessels into the river. So well, however, did Stober make out his case to the hearts and understanding of his people that his clerical brother could no longer restrain an honest indignation, but burst through the midst and left the chapel, exclaiming,

"You speak 'a me! you! long-legged Sabbat-breaker! an me! me am accepted minister of de waud!" Since then this good man has preached to a new congre-

gation, edifying them with poetic imagery of peculiar raciness. Of illustration the black preachers are so fond that it would be unpardonable to refuse a specimen.

In a sermon upon the text "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way," a reverend blacksmith borrowed a happy simile from his own honourable trade.

"De way to hell him broad, easy for walk and ride; de way to he'm like a blacksmith's yard, covered all over with broken iron and nails, broken glass and stones, and every other sort of combustible."

I had a strong desire to sit through a service at Settler Chapel, in order to hear the style and general tone of the most educated of their preachers; but the steam and suffocating atmosphere of a densely-crowded congregation of blacks baffled the attempt, and obliged me to be content with a humbler, although, perhaps, not a less instructive example.

In a remote part of Freetown, inhabited by the least refined of the Liberated,

are several unpretending places of worship, cheaply raised for the benefit of lowly proselytes, and named, from the humble material employed in their construction, grass-houses. It is a matter of doubt whether the ardour of the Missionaries is tempered with discretion in sanctioning them; for it is by no means an established certainty that religious tenets can be safely or usefully inculcated through such ministers as officiate in these temples.

Having heard much of the singular mixture of sacred and profane in the services, I inquired after the most favourable sample of grass-house preaching, and was uniformly directed to visit "Uncle Dickey's Chapel;" "uncle" or "daddy" being a not unusual title given to reverend pastors, and merely denoting spiritual relationship. Mounted upon a little Foulah horse, and with a Kroo attendant on foot by my side, I proceeded one fine Sunday afternoon in quest of Uncle Dickey; holding with the infidel Kroo, as we paced leisurely

onward, some polemic colloquies befitting the day.

The Sabbath is a noiseless time in England and in her colonies; and even here, where the majority consists of Mahometans who sanctify Friday, and Pagans who sanctify no day, the moral few give law to the immoral many, and enforce at least solemn indolence and cessation from customary labour and amusement. The white and blue mantled Foulah and Mandingo conceals his gold-dust propensities, and sits hour after hour upon the ground cross-legged chewing the bitter kola, charming astringent; or with chin resting upon his knee, gazes idly at the passers-by. The irreligious of the Maroons loll from the open verandah, or sleep in the sun. The Liberated rest in their hammocks, kidnap each other, or attend the primitive place of prayer. The active Kroo rests during the heat, nursing his strength for the struggle when the cool evening tempts the wrestlers to the sands of Kroo Creek. The white man, who ordains the day to

be set apart for religious convocation, is enjoying the pleasures of an excursion, is on horseback, or more commonly is gliding in a skiff upon the golden bosom of the estuary, to the Cape, the Carpenter Rock, Pirates' or Cockle Bay; whilst the Settler alone, in smart head-kerchief, clean gown, with the wonted yellow coquetting from beneath, and perhaps an umbrella, tripping along to the favourite chapel, proclaims the serious nature of the day.

Scarcely had I left the stone-house portion of the town, and gained the straggling huts with their half cultivated grounds, when sounds of fierce controversy assailed me. Two women had fallen out, and high words had ensued; the offence had been that one had contemptuously leaped over the boundary of her sensitive neighbour's garden. For a much similar crime Remus died; and ages afterwards, if the poet may be credited,* guiltless generations in Rome were vexed

* Horace, Ode 2, Book 1.

with the calamities of civil war, sent by the gods to revenge the fratricide. If the feelings of Romulus were acute, so were those of Quashiba; and in this fervid clime wrath, quickly ignited, blazes upon slight provocation.

Every usual term of abuse in their respective vocabularies had been expended, when one, incensed beyond all bounds, determined to annihilate her opponent with a fell reproach, and exclaimed, "Ah! you nigger!" This insult from a black to a black was not to be endured; and the insulted, striking her naked side with her hand rapidly and loudly, seized upon the most intolerable epithet which can be applied, and roared, "Me nigger! ah! you—you—jumpy fish!" Battle hereon must have inevitably ensued, but for the forcible separation of the parties.

This sabbath recreation having ended, I paused to enquire of a "Captivated" negro, who stood at his hut door staring at the white man, the way to "Dickey Chapel." Human nature is human nature;

and before he could open his lips to reply, his wife ran from within to give a long and not very intelligible answer instead of her husband; excusing him, "He no sabby for talk, she sabby for talk good." A dialogue ensued.

"Good morning, maamy."

"Tankee daddy." A smile and nod.

"Do you know Uncle Dickey?"

"Me can sabby Daddy Dickey!"

"Who makes preach-palaver at some grass house near this place?"

"Him can make preach-palaver good."

"Then you attend Daddy Dickey?"

"Me can go for hear Daddy Dickey!"

"You like him better than Prince Stober?"

"Ah! him good, Stober much good; but Dickey he pass toder too much: aye, Dickey pass him; Dickey talk big time, talk good noise, talk big, loud, talk big time much till sun go down; him strong, Dickey strong, pass toder!"

After such commendation from an attendant and admirer, it may be supposed

that I soon reached the door of the chapel; and my pagan Kroo, incurious of the interior of a Christian edifice, having taken charge of the steed, I entered the grass-house. It might have been five-and-twenty feet in length, and sixteen or eighteen in breadth; a mere shed of stakes wattled and interwoven with long grass, and coarsely thatched with dry boughs: it had square unglazed openings for the admission of air, the doorway was partially closed with the customary mat, the floor was the bare ground, and the seats were rough planks. A square space around the pulpit had been railed off for the elders and aristocracy, and, as the cordial welcome proved, for such white men as might honour the place with their presence,—an honour very rarely accorded. When the service commenced, I regretted my curiosity: nothing is so painful as the feeling of giving a sanction to a burlesque upon sacred things. The prayer was at first uttered with due deliberation; but as fervour glowed more warmly, the hurried con-

glomeration of words, introducing every possible perversion of the English language, became overpowering. When they sang, an elder, the gashes of whose cicatrised face proclaimed him a convert from paganism, very politely offered me the advantage of his hymn-book, and kindly pointed out line after line with his finger for my benefit, as the shrill voices repeated each stanza. His book was however inverted, and the hymn was not that announced from the pulpit; yet, without discovering his mistake, he sang with singular impetuosity, extemporising words and exercising marvellous independence in *ad libitum* recitative.

Daddy or Uncle Dickey now ascended the pulpit, a large heavy-headed negro in a blue coat with bright metal buttons. Every tongue was silenced, every look fixed, whilst his sharp eye searched each countenance previous to the delivery of his text. The precise subject which the sermon was designed to enforce, it would be difficult to define; even the text being

unintelligible with exception of the words "Sasas, Meesas, an Bennygo," whom he stated to have been "three men walking in an oven." He spake of "Nebuchadnezzas" as "Daddy King, who done make big feast, with plenty banana, plenty yam, plenty kuskusoo, plenty beef-steak and rice, plenty rum and palm-oil, plenty too much." From the zests of the table he plunged into a fervid description of the burning abyss, where "worm no die," and where unfortunates might pray for the rainy season, "but stop a bit, he no done come yet;" and where he assured his friends most of them would inevitably live in endless pain and "troublio."

At the moment of his speaking, the thermometer was standing at 96° in the shade, and the oppressed sense felt this eloquence. "Oh!" he exclaimed, dashing himself forward, "you! all bad! bad! fader in he'm, moder in he'm; you soul in hell, hissing hot in fire and bimtony! Den soul have big-palaver with God: soul him say, God! what matter for me no inglorio?"

The discourse was prolonged over many a weary half-hour, and the good woman's statement that "Daddy Dickey talk good noise till sun go down," seemed a prophecy about to be fulfilled. At length, when every terrific denunciation and withering curse, which depended upon fire and red-hot iron and brimstone, and involved maddening thirst and burnt members, had been introduced with small regard to any specific plan, utterance became impeded by hoarseness, the dry tongue cleaved to the roof of the mouth, and the sermon faded and fell, not from a logical conclusion having been attained, but from sheer inability to talk longer.

One of the black preachers in Freetown preached from the text, "Melchizedec without father, without mother, without "descent," which he proceeded to explain to his audience: "Dat mean for say—without father, him have no daddy; without mother, him have no mammy; without *deé-cent, dat mean for say, without any genteel behaviour at all."

* Accenting the first syllable.

The practice of admitting crude converts to the exercise of pastoral and clerical functions appears faulty. Too great readiness should not be shown to claim as spiritual aids the ignorant and the inexperienced, whether white or black. True, that some of the first teachers of the Christian religion were not men of acknowledged or presumed education, nor of high rank; allowing however for the different states of society in an ancient and eastern nation, the stations which the Apostles occupied in the estimation of their contemporaries were not probably of that extreme lowliness which is often attributed to them in addresses to the humbler classes of the present day.* Nor are we bound to consider them illiterate:

* Amongst the Foulahs and others, handicraft trades are privileged; the artisans are held in great esteem: the blacksmiths' profession, including every species of metallic work; and that of the tailors, extending to every operation connected with tent-making, clothing, &c. are practised by the sons of kings.

some, at least, we know to have investigated science, and to have searched the recesses of philosophy; but, even if it had not been so, inspiration imparted all essential knowledge. Their immediate successors the Fathers, unaided by inspiration and the power of working miracles, were men of erudition. It is a mistake to entrust the promulgation and defence of sacred yet assailed tenets, to such as enjoy neither the advantage of educated mind nor of inspiration. Zeal without discretion has been the unwitting source of large evil to the very cause which it had burned to promote. With respect to some of the negro preachers, the sole excuse must be, that any acknowledgment of Christianity is preferable to open paganism.

In various parts of Sierra Leone are schools for the education of the young generation of blacks, supported chiefly by the Government and the Church Missionary Association, and three by voluntary subscription. In these, in the year 1833, there were instructed 2437 boys, of whom

438 belonged to schools in Freetown. An institution also for educating teachers existed at Fourah Bay. The expense of instruction amounted to 1400*l.* in the year. Inculcation of Christian morality and doctrine enters largely into the routine of education, particularly in the Sunday schools ; and the young blacks promise to adopt a higher moral and mental standard than that of their fathers.

An incident occurred within my own observation which proved that the heart and understanding should be cultivated when religious instruction is pressed upon youthful pupils, and that even the most sacred rites may otherwise be unassociated with solemn feeling.

One day, when the scorching sun was at its height, I had defied its enmity in order to stroll along the Pa Demba road to the splendid woods which alone appeared to enjoy coolness. Whilst making my way through a copse of magnificent shrubs interspersed with flowers which are rare even in an English hot-house, and with

the ripe pine-apple growing so profusely as to be passed neglected, repeated shouts of laughter drew me to the bank of the sheltered brook that flowed beneath. A number of boys and girls were bathing and splashing in the clear stream. The cause of their merriment soon discovered itself. Each was trying to approach one of his companions unperceived, and, when sufficiently near, would seize upon him, and exclaiming "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," would plunge him under water, and hold the baptised beneath as long as possible. Whenever a wily rogue contrived to give his friend this unexpected and profane immersion, the air resounded with laughter; and the joke, unlike the generality of jokes, seemed to grow more attractive from repetition.

The colony owes much to the labours of the various Missionaries, perhaps more than to any other class of men.

The Church of England has its representatives amongst them, as have the In-

dependents, the Wesleyans, and the Moravians. The latter, chiefly Germans, have been long in Western Africa, where their indefatigable exertions and excellent conduct have earned for them respect and esteem. At an early period Moravian Missionaries sought this rich but rank and uncultivated field; their industry has brought forth fruits, and their perseverance is ensuring a plentiful harvest. An admirable man, a Missionary, died, during my residence in Freetown, at a good old age, and full of that honour which is the most sterling in the world's gift,—the regard of all good men. He had lived in the Peninsula, devoting his life to the work of social and religious improvement, for upwards of twenty-two years; and the affection which he had awakened in the breasts of hundreds was visible in the countenances of the mourners who poured from town and village to attend his funeral. All who have been accustomed to take interest in the religious improvement

of the negro will at once feel that I speak of Mr. Wilhelm.

Some idea of the progress of education through the schools and the Missionaries may be formed upon a letter written by a "Captive." This man had, some years before, been liberated from the slave-ship; and, on landing in Sierra Leone, understood not a syllable of the English language, and was, in fact, in the usual state of profound barbarism.

The epistle was sent to a gentleman who had been a benefactor.

"DEAR MOTHER, "York, April, 29, 1834.

"I am very sorry to inform you these few lines. I hope this letter will meet you in a good state of health if you please, and kind in telling you that my wife will come and see you poor woman. I told her that she must go, since my old master depart this life I have no more master again nor mother. I thank God that you is in this African land. I never was

thought that I will see my master brother in this land; since that I very trouble about something to eat this go in five months. I begin to build my little house I am not able to finish it, since that I am very trouble. I am not able to get a quart of rice to eat, neither a shirt to put on my back; and I inform this to you mam, because you is the only mother I have got in this land of Africa.

"I Rem. yrs truly

"and poor humb. Sert.

"JOSEPH MACAULAY."

The letter is singularly free from faults in orthography, and was written in a better hand than is common even in mercantile houses. Two peculiarities will be noticed: the benefactor is addressed as "Mother," a circumstance, perhaps, referable to the effect of polygamy in yielding intense and almost exclusive affection to the maternal parent; and the negro bears an English name; it had been assumed in accordance with the general custom of

adopting the appellation of a white master or protector.

It has been mentioned that amongst the black inhabitants of Freetown, some, as the Kroos, who do not contemplate permanent residence, refrain from learning white man's book: on the contrary, those who embrace fixedly the advantages of the British colony, evince a strong desire to attain the accomplishments of civilisation, or to acquire them for their children. I remember a sturdy but not unkind Yaloff man, who, having no hopes of literary advancement himself, was formidably bent on that of his boy, a droll little ebony grinning naked rogue, the blackest son of the blackest parents I ever beheld. The little fellow was but three years of age, and sadly preferred chewing cassada to digesting the alphabet; and yet, all things being considered, he attended his school regularly, and trod the rugged paths of orthography with a pace satisfactory to all but his unlettered sire. The father, who spoke the Yaloff language only, and

knew not a single English character, lived at a short distance from the house where little Harry dwelt, and used to pay him frequent visits. At all such times he was wont to question his son on his attainments, and oblige him to read a long list of monosyllables and polysyllables, all of which were perfect Greek to himself; invariably terminating the interview with a smart whipping, deserved or undeserved, and a command in Yaloff to make more progress for the future in English.

The extent of instruction is necessarily limited. No books existing excepting elementary ones, no such trade is known in the whole Peninsula as that of a bookseller. Even printing would be regarded as an exotic curiosity but for a single press in the office of the Colonial Secretary, occasionally used for striking off the stated official documents for Government. A newspaper was once published, but it degenerated into a mere Government gazette for proclamations, altogether unlike the spirited journals that issue from the press

at Liberia, under the efficient management of negro editors.* If the coloured population of Freetown is unequal to the successful publication of a periodical, and even to the enjoyment of one; yet, situated as Sierra Leone is, in the midst of nations as remarkable as any upon earth, little known though easily studied; with habits, manners, and superstitions the most ancient and of the most peculiar kind, constantly open to observation in the colony itself; whilst its resources, its productions, its geological character, its meteorological phenomena, invite an investigation which would be rewarded; it is strange that no print exists to receive into its columns valuable and interesting information.

* See in the pages of the Liberia Herald, very able dissertations on the origin of certain tribes, as the Fellatahs, written by a negro.

CHAPTER XII.

AMUSEMENTS OF THE NEGROES OF THE CAPITAL.

SONG AND DANCE.

Music and Dancing — Tomtoms. — The Koonking and Tallala.—Fascination.— Songs. — Objections of the Whites against the Dances of the Blacks.— Interference.—Akoo wild Dance.—Melancholy Dance of Women.—Sympathy wasted.—Chance festivity.—Dancing on Horseback.

When the moonlight lies upon the sea, the town, and forest, and universal repose has fallen upon nature, the rolling of the mellow tomtom may be heard, borne from a distance by the night-air. Dance and song are the genuine inspiration of the Africans; their feet never tire, their voice never droops. Each nation appears to have its peculiar dance; peculiar in gesture,

but similar in a constant accompaniment of the voice. The two most civilised tribes of blacks in Freetown are the Settlers and Maroons; and night after night do the Settler and Maroon maidens meet in some enclosure surrounded by orange and lime trees, and for eight or ten hours successively maintain unwearied the lively recreation. The Mahometans are enemies to mirth, and I never saw a Foulah woman mingle in the midnight festivities. The all-ravishing dance of the Freetown maidens is called a Koonken or Koonking by the Settlers, by the Maroons a Tallala. As soon as the sun goes down, the mirthful party assembles. A man is hired to beat the tomtom at the expense of a dollar; ale and refreshments are procured, and the necessary contributions are diligently sought and thankfully received from the kindly disposed of any colour. Having given a few cut-monies to aid the fund soon after my arrival, I became a popular visitor at their recreations, and had the gratification of finding the happy

circle "make sing" upon me at my first entrance. The "sing" is a brief immortality, giving an assurance of pleasurable recollection amongst a set of innocent beings when far away.

The tomtom is a deep hollow-toned drum, in form like an hour-glass; borrowed by the Europeans from the African, and altered by them in shape, but not improved in mellow depth of sound. In journeying through the woods, the tomtom is carried under the left arm, and beaten with the right hand, in order to scare away the leopards, boa-constrictors, baboons, and other unwelcome inhabitants of the forest, those

"Native burghers of that desert city"

who might chance to cross the traveller's path.

In the canoe, the black cockswain beats his "piccaniny tomtom," or little drum, to the loud recitative by which he cheers the paddling crew. At the Koonking, seated upon the ground, the negro musician holds the tomtom between his knees,

and strikes the sonorous skin with the palm, first of one hand, and then of the other.

The dancing women range themselves in a wide circle; one commences singing a favourite song of meagre poetry, but luscious with humour and personal allusion, and at due intervals the whole join in chorus. The entire assemblage swing their arms backwards and forwards, and clap their hands regularly to mark the time. One or two quit the circle, or "get out," as they term it, and entering the open space in the midst, commence the Koonking. The gestures are most singular, nor did I ever find the white man who with the greatest practice could imitate them. The dances of the inhabitants of this heated region avoid violent exertion; if fatigue comes, it is simply the result of motion long continued. The young maiden glides round within the circle of her singing and hand-clapping friends, waving her arms, and scarcely moving the feet; but, at every beat of the time, jerk-

ing up the hip or "boondo" on one side in a ludicrous manner; others drop in and imitate her; each is eager to dance; excitement arises, it becomes contagion. Another and then another starts from the ranks; the hands are clapped more vigorously, the flood of song swells high, the tomtom is beat more rapidly, and the group are in Elysium. Round after round is thus spun; the shrill sound of some score of voices proclaims the joy far and wide; maidens at a distance hearing the song hasten to partake in the intoxication, and before midnight few spots of earth witness such highly wrought madness of pleasure as that favoured by the Koonking. The growing excitement is amusingly developed. At first, the "boondo" is jerked at lazy intervals, and the drapery of the Settler and Maroon is less discomposed than it would be in a waltz. By degrees, however, the agitated hip acquires a perpetual fitful motion, the gowns and kerchiefs become oppressive, the tight band essential to smartness of figure is loosened; grace,

neatness, and everything else, are lost in the deep fascination. The dancers seize upon the bystanders, and whirl them willing or unwilling into the spinning maze; meanwhile the song changes to the livelier or more jocose, the moonlight streams upon the happy party, and the air breathes of the orange-flower thickly covering the surrounding trees.

These merry meetings frequently continue till late in the morning; for, excepting in the few months of the rainy season, no foul weather occurs to mar the innocent festivity.

The dance-music is not at first inspiring to the European, who imports a cultivated taste for harmony and chromatic modulation. The most bare simplicity characterises the Koonking song; harmony is not attempted; whilst the melody is confined to a very limited compass, seldom extending to an octave; yet, as in the rude airs of our own villages, in the old Scotch ballad, in the ancient Irish and Welsh songs, a few notes often convey a touching pathos.

The "sing" of the Settler and Maroon girls is generally short, and in a minor key, although not invariably. Each stanza is repeated by a single voice, or a few only, whilst the chorus unites all. Some songs have been handed down from early times, having probably been favourites in America with generations now no more; but by far the greater number in vogue in Freetown are indigenous, and record some local occurrence, or preserve in humorous satire the memory of some white man. The Africans have great powers of improvising, and the uncivilized tribes almost invariably accompany their dance with extempore effusions; the Settlers and Maroons improvise also, but delight in the stock of popular songs constantly repeated.

The universal favourite amongst the dark songstresses of Freetown is a "sing" upon a white gentleman, who has the gratification of knowing that the negro population of the Peninsula gratefully call him the "best man in the colony;" a

title which few who have witnessed the exercise of his hospitality, his generosity, and nobleness of heart towards both white and black, will desire to dispute. This "sing" starts from the lip of many a bashful maid, as the beneficent friend of the negro rides through the suburbs of the capital, or passes through the neighbouring villages. It is scarcely more than the repetition of a name, but even the mere repetition gives them pleasure.

This is a constant song at the dance, and, as it appeared to me, an endless one; verse following verse, with scarcely more change than that of a word. I one day begged a young Settler of fourteen or fifteen years of age to favour me with the whole. She paused after repeating a few lines. "But there are more words, Bella; you sing much more at the Koonking." "Oh!" said she, "me can't 'memba hab; me old too much. Ah! me head him gone quite. Me mo dan fifty year of old, he! he! he!" The fact is,

that on such occasions the additions are prolonged *ad libitum*.

The love-song is generally simple, and not the less pleasing for being so.

Alice! oh!

Alice oh! ayeea, ayeea,
I like you so! ayeea, ay,
I like you so! ayeea, ay,
Alice oh! ayeea, ayeea.

The liveliest dance is often inspired by words conveying the most melancholy sentiment. The following song contains much feeling, yet ends with that ludicrous turn which so delights the sable satirists. It commemorates the early death of a poor girl, Rose, once a lively partaker in the mirth of the Koonking, and records her last and poetic request to her friend Jemima.

Ah! Jemima.

Ah! Jemima, when I die,
Take poor Rose and anoint her down,
Anoint her down with turtle-oil,
And make her bed as soft as roses.

Chorus—Ah! Rose! Rose! Rose ah! yeo!
Yarrieuh! yarrieuh!
Rose has got no character.

It may be necessary to remark that the body of a black deceased is anointed, usually with palm-oil; but at the time of Rose's death, fashion, which rules even the Settler of Sierra Leone, had introduced the more refined turtle-oil. The words "yarrieuh! yarrieuh!" are lamentations. The final line conveys a small joke, which consists in substituting the name of any present at its singing, and in thus exciting a momentary laugh against each other.*

Another pathetic song, incongruously connected with the sprightly dance, re-

* A liberty has been taken in employing English words instead of the original phraseology; as repeated by the songstresses, the above would sound thus—

Ah! Zemimy, when I die,
Take poo Rose and 'noint him down,
'Noint him down wid tauckel oil,
And make de bed soft as rose, &c.

The sentiment is not altered.

cords the death of a labouring man, who fell from the tower of Freetown church, where he was employed in stone-work, and was killed upon the spot. His wife had just come down from the mountains to meet him, and was standing by the shattered corpse, bewailing him, in the language of her tribe, "Va! serendee, va! serendee," when a Settler girl, on her way to the dance, passed by, and witnessed the woman's grief. Upon joining her companions under the orange-trees, the circle was no sooner formed, and the tomtom struck, than she commenced a new "sing," which still survives; an epitaph more lasting in the memory of the dancers than one engraven upon stone.

Who tell this man for kill himself?

Who tell dis man for kill himself?
Chorus—Va! serendee, va! serendee.
Look! de brain come out de man head!
Look! de man do kill himself!
Chorus—Va! serendee, va! serendee.

But the ballads do not commonly dwell upon any important sentiment; they are

chiefly a bare repetition of names in connexion with "notes," doubtless denoting billets-doux. Many of these are adapted to tunes of exquisite beauty or of inspiring liveliness; as is the following, which, once heard, takes possession of the ear.

I write a note.

I write a note and put him down,
Chorus—Lalla hey, lalla hey.
I write a note and put him down,
And Missa*——take him up;
Chorus—Lalla hey, lalla hey,
And Missa——take him up.

I write me sunting (something), none can peep in da,
Chorus—Lalla hey, lalla hey.
I write me sunting, none can peep in da,
No Settler girl dare peep in da,
Chorus—Lalla hey, lalla hey,
But Missa——*may* peep in *da.*

An exceedingly brisk "sing," to an equally brisk melody, and one which is certain to be introduced when the excitement of the Koonking rises high, is

* In all cases where blanks occur, the name is *ad libitum;* mostly that of some gentleman present.

Missa——where you go?

Oh! Missa——, where you go?
Chorus—I go de river, hey!
When you go, write me note,
Chorus—And say your name, say!

Oh! Missa——, where you go?
Chorus—I go de Gambia, hey!
When you go, write me note,
Chorus—And say your name, say!

Oh! Missa——, where you go?
Chorus—I go to England, London, the Scarcies, Tombo, Bullom, Sherbro', or any well-known place.

This little song, and a pretty one it is, may have as many verses as there are places on the globe, and deserves to be dedicated to the members of the Geographical Society.

One of the most popular of dance-poems is

Oh! Carolina.

Oh! Carolina,
* " Get out," you Carolina!
Chorus—Shake yourself and let me see you.

When you asked, and me no give you?†
When you asked, and me no give you?
Chorus—Shake yourself, come let me see you.

French words sometimes occur. My informant could not tell their import, but repeated them mechanically, and with a pronunciation which would have dismayed a Parisian. She could not explain from what source they had been derived, but contented herself with saying, " Him white man's language, me no can sabby him."

Ah! Rose.

Ah! Rose, dey come; young man, shake yourself.
Trouvez, yonder.
Young man, shake yourself;
Trouvez, yonder.

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* Meaning, Leave the circle, enter the space in the midst, and let me see you " shake yourself," or dance.

† When did you ask any favour of me which I did not grant?

It is the fashion for the white colonists to look unfavourably upon these recreations; and, upon many occasions, I have heard vigorous measures threatened to put down the dance, still the songs, and abolish the tomtoms. The rolling drum and prolonged chorus heard by the Europeans through the stillness of night are pronounced a nuisance. One gentleman decided that he would not suffer his comfort to be invaded by the sound of distant mirth after the hour of ten; a second considered that the dance ought not to be permitted to continue beyond nine, the hour of his own retiring from the labours and pleasures of the day; another, of still earlier habits, would not allow the blacks to enjoy their Koonking and Tallala after eight o'clock; whilst all three determined to enforce the gradual suppression of the dance, with the co-operation of the police.

I have heard it gravely maintained that the tomtom is a barbarous instrument, and should not offend the ears of white

men; and that until the flute, the violin, or the piano be adopted by the blacks, the Koonking should cease. My own experience, however, compels me to acknowledge that I have been more annoyed by white amateurs upon civilised instruments than by the distant streams of melody from the happy circle, and the deep, smooth beat of the time-marking tomtom.

A more rational argument for interdicting the further enjoyment of their native and immemorial recreation was urged by a gentleman who professed himself an advocate for locking up in the police-prison these simple beings whenever their musical pastime interfered with his evening silence. He considered that the assembling together of the young of both sexes by moonlight, and under the exciting influence of song and dance, had a tendency to relax that stern, moral discipline which is essential to the well-being of society.

If it is true, which is not at all proved, that the dance leads to dissipation, it would be well to check it, even at the

expense of taking from the people their beloved and almost sole amusement. Such an excuse might be admitted; at all events, it is more worthy than one which claims for the comfort of a few, the sacrifice of a national and habitual enjoyment of the many.

The happiness and ultimate improvement of the large black population of Sierra Leone will not be secured by crushing their innocent amusements; on the contrary, the whites, by taking an interest in them instead of checking, might easily encourage what was harmless and discountenance what was injurious; and the gratitude of the colonists would give birth to an affection and regard for their white friends. An influence acquired by kindness is more powerful over a negro than that of mastery.

I remember a case of what appeared wanton interference with the pleasure of a party of young Maroons. In passing through Maroon-town, the wonted sound of voice and tomtom drew me to an enclo-

sure girt with orange and lime trees in full flower, cactuses, and the beautiful wild tamarind, on which the new moon was faintly glancing; and there were seen many a Maroon and Settler in the full enjoyment of the Tallala. When the festivity was at its height, and every thought of earthly ill lay for the moment dead, a white man's servant entered in haste, presented a "book*" which he stated he had brought *for me*, and then departed. The "book" was a short note without address. Having called for a light, a score of dancers gathered round in pardonable curiosity, but with candles and torches as an excuse. They anxiously watched my countenance as I read the contents—

"Please to send the constables and some police to disperse the noisy assemblage, and take the offenders into custody."

These words were read aloud; instantly the dance broke off, the tomtom and the voices were silenced, and the mirthful faces gave way to imploring fear. I how-

* The common term for letter or note.

ever tore the note to pieces before them, and bade them dance on; and before I had ridden from them a hundred yards, to intercede with the foe to their mirth, the "sing" and the drum and the clapping of hands were again in full harmony; and I felt pleased at the mistake of the servant, who had put the note into my possession instead of delivering it to one who would have carried its harsh request into effect.

A totally different exhibition was the wild dance of the savage Akoo, which I had the fortune to witness during an afternoon walk in company with two officers. The sun was still above the horizon, glaring upon the hot waste on which the huts of this barbarous tribe are raised, and every step required a degree of vigour not easily summoned, when the harsh shouts of a crowd of Akoo men broke from the distance of a hundred yards, and gave spur to our energies. We soon arrived at one of the most novel sights in this land of novelties. In front of a hut, stood a number of men, amounting to fifty or sixty,

and arranged in a hollow square; the vacant space being left for the principal performers. The gold and blue uniform of my companions inspired the savages with sufficient respect to induce them to open their ranks, that we might stand in the inner line of spectators. The dance was hereupon resumed with fearful fury. The object of the performance seemed to be inspiring terror, and every effort of the dancer was directed to subdue the courage of the bystanders. No women were present excepting one or two, who hung, ready for instant retreat, upon the very outskirts of the throng, cautiously peeping from afar at the hideous operation. An Akoo, with a small handkerchief bound round his loins, left the ranks, and immediately bending his knees, so that he appeared to sit upon the ground, sprung about like a madman, and flourished his arms with quick and violent action; at the same time throwing his face into a series of most diabolical distortions, and writhing the muscles of his brawny chest and

abdomen in a wonderful manner, like dough fermenting. Instead of the Koonking song, light and playful, rough throats shouted a harsh recitative in the Akoo language, raising or subduing the tones in proportion as the artist exaggerated or relaxed his display of the horrible; meanwhile, selecting one of the spectators as his victim, the monster suddenly rushed at him in well-feigned rage and with an alarming cry. If this unexpected onset caused the party to start or shrink back, cheers from the people rewarded his success; if, on the contrary, the attack was philosophically borne, he turned his attention to some fellow-savage of weaker nerve.

When satisfied or wearied with his fierce exploits, he returned to the ranks; whence another instantly started, and, with intoxication of rivalry strong upon him, strove to surpass his predecessor in the atrocity of his feats.

Thus was the succession kept up without intermission. Unfortunately, the "bravest of the brave," in the struggle for pre-

eminence, had the audacity to select the white men as worthy of a desperate charge, notwithstanding the military bearing and haughty swords of my friends. A laugh, and the present of a cut-money for his prowess, made the whole assemblage desirous of spending upon us their friendly fury; it became time, therefore, to check a liberality which might have made the show an expensive one, and we departed no less gratified with the strange exhibition than the Akoos were with the white man's money. The contortions, threatening attitudes, and shouts, gave me the impression that we had been present at a war-dance. The entire performance was in perfect keeping with the uncouth character of the tribe.

One of the most touching sights which it fell to my lot to witness amongst the uncivilised Africans was a dance of women. They were said to be Papaws.

Returning to Freetown on horseback, from a novel ride through wood and brake and cultivated gardens, I had just re-en-

tered the high-road, when I perceived a procession of women moving slowly. When overtaken, I found the party to consist of thirty or forty of every age; some old and haggard, some young and graceful, some with children fastened to their backs, and nearly all wearing a white cotton from the waist. Two or three, rather in advance, bore long rough rods in the hand; and the entire assemblage proceeded with downcast eyes and in profound silence. I spoke, but received no answer; until, after having walked some distance, and commenced a low chaunt, the party stopped. They intimated that they were about to dance. The slow step and downcast eye, the white drapery, the solemn movement of the wand-bearers, had already imparted a sentiment of melancholy, and in some measure served to introduce the deeper feeling of the ceremony which succeeded.

Standing for a short time, they continued chaunting; many voices joined in occasional chorus; and the hands, gently swung backwards and forwards, were

struck together as in the Koonking. After some minutes they arranged themselves in a circle; one half then dropped upon the ground on their knees, whilst the women of the other semicircle remained standing. Three unhappy-looking, wrinkled old women, tall and spare, moved into the centre, and were joined slowly and timidly by a young maiden; these were the dancers. Motion in the feet, which were not raised from the ground, was hardly perceptible; but the knees trembled, the shoulders were agitated, and the bosom heaved with frequent sighs. During this time, one of the standing semicircle sang a few simple notes, which a lamenting chorus instantly answered; whilst all who were kneeling beat their uncovered bosoms sharply with the right hand, and stroked the hip with the left upwards and downwards in contrary motion, bowing their heads to the earth, and either partially or entirely closing the eyes.

Grief had subdued every countenance;

no ludicrous or even rapid gesture, no smile, no warm excitement, interrupted the distressing appearance of woe. The monotony was only relieved by the leader varying the chaunt every four or five minutes, when the chorus immediately responded. After a long and interesting survey of the group, I offered the nearest a cut-money as a farewell token; having expended a similar coin on the furious Akoo combatant, I could do no less to the Papaw mourner, if mourner she were. After a tragedy follows the farce. When the shabby jagged piece of silver was exhibited to the performers, eyes were lifted from the ground, bended knees became straight as by magic, the quiet feet grew nimble, the hand which beat the bosom was outstretched to receive more of my wealth, and the calm solo lament swelled into a loud chorus of entreaties for coppers and cut-monies.

Like the Krickery-boo or Dance of Death of the Kroomen, and the Akoo display of spirit and courage, this dance might

be national, bearing allusion to some general feeling. That my first impression was incorrect I am convinced: it was that the women were in a state of actual grief; perhaps bewailing their lost country, whence they had been conveyed as captives, torn from their husbands, their children, and nearest relatives. It was scarcely possible to help assigning such a cause to that touching woe, which appeared to subdue every heart and every voice. But my interesting sympathy had been wasted, and for a few coppers the pathetic would have been acted over again. The performance however, whatever its meaning, was singularly affecting.

There are numerous other dances amongst the mixed population of Freetown and the neighbouring villages. Nothing is easier than to make one; nothing more is required than to give a man money to strike a tomtom, and numbers of either sex will rapidly collect together, without further invitation, and set themselves in motion.

I went to visit a Mahometan village near the capital, in order to examine the place of worship, which, for want of a regularly appointed mosque, invites within its rude enclosure of scattered stones many a long-robed devotee. Not far from this village of True Believers, lay the cot of an infidel, to which a man with a tomtom had chanced to stray. He had no sooner struck the instrument, than the master of the house left his occupation, came into the garden and began to shake himself, striking up the dust with his feet, and working the muscles of his loins and shoulders. A neighbour ran to join him; and the pair, face to face, strove to excel in excess of shaking and wriggling. The young people of the family caught the infection and forsook their rice and oil, but not without a rebuke from the mother; who, with a miserable child yellow with the craw-craw at her back, came forth to recall the piccaninies to their dinner. Yet, even whilst scolding them, her own frame grew restive, her shoulders were

shrugged, her hands rose and fell, and in a moment all was over with her matronly sedateness. Each instant she became more energetic, to the discomfiture of the unhappy little son tied behind her, who lay there in no easy bed, and had not health to enjoy such rough pleasure. By degrees young and old dropped in, until the garden was filled with mothers loaded with babes, and children with food in their hands which they ate as they danced, and labourers holding their implements of industry, all vibrating from side to side like pendulums. As their mode of dancing hardly demanded the use of feet, and chiefly required movements of the head, arms, and chest, although upon horseback I imitated the rest to their abundant amusement. When the excitement subsided I cannot tell; for when I had galloped away, the tomtom music died from distance alone. Probably, as evening advanced, fresh additions were made to the assemblage; and the casual visit of a

drummer caused a happy night of festivity.*

* I have confined my notice of the amusements in the capital of the British colony to the dance and song; not having seen them before described. Individuals of the different tribes amuse themselves with their country games, as found in the narratives of different travellers in Africa. The Kolungees, and Sundees, or dancing-girls of the Bulloms, did not perform in Freetown; nor did the Kárramukko favour the townspeople with his songs during my short stay. The Banja Merrwang, the Gumbay, and indeed most of the African musical instruments, are common in the West Indies. The Carabas or lyre of the Kroos, and the Shakee-shakee, for ever in the hands of the girls, have been mentioned in a former place; and the Kyungee-bel or game of palm-nuts, rare in Sierra Leone, will be noticed in connexion with the Timmanees. For accounts of the popular games of the Timmanees, Bulloms, and others, as the Kyungeepoo, the Wurm-keur, &c. see *Winterbottom*.

CHAPTER XIII.

VILLAGES OF SIERRA LEONE.

Location of captured Slaves.—Districts of the Peninsula. —Census. —Managements. —Disadvantages under which Managers labour.—Ride to Regent.—Mountain Scenery.—Animals.—Tipsy Chamelions.—Town of Regent.—Children's terror at White Men.—Interesting information from a reclaimed Ibbo.—Kidnapping Children.—Gratitude.—Market.—Magic.—An Incantation. Case of Cannibalism at Regent.—Cannibals of the Western Coast.—Cargo of Church Clocks.—Sugar-loaf Mountain.—Wild Beasts.—Audacity of Leopards and Monkeys.—Ride to Kissey.—Albino Children of Negroes.—Serracoolas.—Meeting with Mungo Park's last guide.—Evil Road.—Mountain Torrent.—A Negro Jockey.—Idiots and aged Negroes.—Fever Hospital at Kissey.—Contagion.—Native Customs.—Kola Seed.—Comparative value of a Wife and a Horse.—Native Villages.

THE fertile valleys and romantic mountains of Sierra Leone are sprinkled with villages inhabited by the "Captives." These Liberated were originally grouped in

hamlets according to their tribes; a plan afterwards deemed impolitic, and which was certainly inconvenient, since no cargo of slaves consists of individuals belonging to one nation, but of many, and these often not easily ascertained. One obvious benefit results from locating together those who speak different languages; namely, the necessity of their adopting some common medium of intercourse, which is most naturally that of their friends and masters the English; a decided step towards ulterior civilisation.

The villages of the colony are classed in three divisions defined by their situation; two mountain districts, two sea districts, and four river districts.

The principal villages in the first division are,

	Colonised in	Distant from Freetown
Leicester,	1809	2½ miles.
Regent,	1812	6 ——
Gloucester,	1816	5 ——
Charlotte,	1818	7 ——
Bathurst,	1818	6 ——

together with Aberdeen, Wilberforce, and Murray. The population numbers six whites and 7931* blacks.

The most important locations in the sea districts are

	Colonised in	Distant from Freetown
York,	1818	16 miles.
Kent,	1819	———

With Hamilton, and those upon the Banana Islands, containing one white inhabitant and 3103 blacks.

In the four river districts are many towns and villages, as Kissey, Wellington, Allan's-town, Hastings, Denham's-town, Rokelle, Waterloo. Their vicinity to the river grants facility of communication, and promises health, from the situation being more open to the free ocean atmosphere. The inhabitants of these districts amount to four whites and 10,488 blacks.

Adding to the above numbers that of the residents in the capital, the entire population of Sierra Leone is 31,460 : of whom there are 74 white men, 10 white

* The census is of 1833.

women ; 18,089 blacks, males ; 13,297 blacks, females.

Each district is under the care of a Manager, generally a white man, appointed by the Governor. These are, in fact, sub-governors, usually if not always in the commission of the peace, and holding military command in some cases ; as at York, upon the southern extremity of the Peninsula, and the Banana Islands.

The Manager is not seldom the sole white inhabitant of his district. Without society, without power of indulging in literary pursuits, his reward is a trifling salary, the temporary use of unclaimed land, and such dignity as may be accorded to a subaltern commanding in chief. Many considerable villages are without the permanent presence of any white man ; and excepting when the Governor is pleased to make a tour of inspection, or the Manager rides through from his distant seat of authority, the discipline of the villages is maintained by a black resident constable. The system of management

struck me as being by no means a fortunate one.

To plan the line of a new street of huts, to visit the Sunday-schools, to order criminals their allowance of flogging, to settle disputes between master and apprentice, or "slave," as the blacks term it, are matters exacting no immoderate degree of mental superiority; but when it is considered that between twenty and thirty thousand free British subjects in a state of the most absolute ignorance are cherished in the colony for the purpose of improvement, it is hardly fair either to the Manager or the managed that little scope for the exercise of beneficial authority is enjoyed by the one, and little stimulus to exertion and progress applied to the other. A Manager should be a man of peculiar talent and strength of mind; he should possess a knowledge of government generally, and be acquainted with the habits and prejudices of the people under him; and it is most essential that his disposition and bearing should be cal-

culated to win affection and to command respect: and if, at present, such men fill the situations, it must be regarded as a happy chance; for the temptations to undertake an office so responsible, so burdensome, and of such precarious tenure, are indeed few.

Dwelling in the only stone or wooden house within many miles, the Manager superintends a population of several thousands distributed over a large extent of country. He has nearly as many official aspects as a Proteus. The blacks are quarrelsome, and as the English discipline takes the law out of the hands of the belligerents, as Justice of the Peace he consumes much of the morning in listening to quarrel-palaver, which involves interminable "axpalaver" and "tell-palaver." Roads through the forest and by the mountain sides must be marked out or preserved in repair, and bridges must be thrown over the frequent torrent-worn gullies that intersect the face of the Peninsula under his direction as the Pontifex. The black

militia must be kept in training by the white captain, who himself finds no small degree of courage necessary to enable him to withstand the fire of an African sun. Schools for inculcating the first elements of reading must be conducted under his care as the visitor-in-chief: and whilst the indefatigable Manager, who bears the accumulated weight of all these duties and, exercises his important functions in many villages, is rising early and lying down late in the cause, in order to introduce gradual improvement amongst his barbarous subjects, a new horde of savages, fresh from a captured slaver, is perhaps poured at once upon his district, to be located and trained by him, and, in a word, to undergo the tedious process of civilisation.

It might be well to allow the inhabitants of those villages which have made some advancement, to continue their progress without being thus forced into perpetual contact and society with men direct from their native woods, and still under

the full influence of barbarous habits; by associating with whom, tastes dulled but not dead, and propensities checked but not annihilated, are perpetually excited anew. The flame will not die away so long as fresh oil is poured into the lamp.

Regent.

This village is one of the oldest, and from its extent and population is more commonly called a town. It was founded above twenty years ago, and offers a fair example of the amelioration to be expected from the Liberated.

The distance of this midland town is considered rather formidable from the circumstance of the road, at parts precipitous, winding over the bold sides of Leicester Mountain in one continued ascent of nearly five miles from Freetown. To reach Regent becomes an undertaking of magnitude, requiring two or three hours' exposure to the sun even on horseback.

Being invited to join a party in an excursion to this beautiful spot, I ordered

my horse to be ready at gun-fire, or half-past five in the morning, as we wished to arrive at our destination before the heat had acquired its mid-day intensity. After breakfast, at the hospitable board of the Commissary, where we were joined by an officer of the man-of-war then in the river, we started for the mountains. Already we met the villagers pouring into Free-town, with their bundles of long grass, and their calabashes filled with the various simple merchandise for the market: and as we entered upon the abrupt and rugged ascent of the hill-path, men, women, and children, sedulously plodding to the general emporium in hope of gaining a copper, greeted the white men; the elder respectfully, but the younger, especially the girls, taking care to run a yard or two amongst the underwood of the deep forest which sheltered either side of the road, lest the awful animal, the horse, should perchance "yam" or eat them,—a fear very prevalent.

As the road wound up the steep, the

eye at every turn revelled in the splendour of mountain towering above mountain, and valleys far below in dark shade. Here, a ravine exhibited in its harsh outline of shattered rocks the fury of some former convulsion ; there, a patch of bush ground, cleared for cultivation, showed by charred stumps of trees and the ashy surface of the soil that fire had been employed to bare the surface previous to the coming rains ; beneath lay the mud huts of Freetown, and the interminable Atlantic spread beyond ; whilst, separated by an arm of the sea, many a league of low country inhabited by untamed savages of innumerable tribes, where Mungo Park had died and Laing had fallen, added interest to the exciting prospect.

Each step onwards discovered some new forest wonder. The palm-tree, rising with a shaft of nearly two hundred feet in height, and crowned with its fan of feathery leaves and clusters of fruit ; the lordly pullom, covered with its wild cotton ; the fantastic locust, bearing leaves

of such dissimilar forms that they seem to belong to different trees; the wild tamarind; the green cashew, with its strange fruit; and innumerable vegetable giants, shaded us, festooned to their summits with magnificent creepers, which, running up the stem and along the loftiest branches, fell to the ground,—a leafy drapery, studded with scarlet and blue and white flowers. Parasitical plants, some like honeysuckles, some orchidea, some with long, cream-coloured, pendulous trumpets, bloomed upon the old stumps and branches, laughing at their decay, yet kindly hiding it. The rarest treasures of the hot-house sprung up wherever the absence of underwood permitted, together with the despised and over-prolific pine-apple.

Lizards, in countless armies, glittered upon the stones: and the chamelion, sometimes green, sometimes blue, sometimes golden, with patterns of brown spots, hung lazily from many a twig, quietly watching for any luckless fly that might

alight within reach of its lazy tongue.* Everything in the tropics is filled with life. The variegated palm-birds held ceaseless chatter-palaver as they fluttered round their hanging nests; the widow-bird swept by with her long black weeds; the mole-cricket, grating like a saw, sprang about; insects of every shape and shade swarmed, from the brilliant locust, the peaceful mason-wasp, and the irised butterfly, to the dull mantis, which, excepting when in motion, would be

* The chamelion is held in great horror by the blacks, who assert that it "spit in yyie" and causes blindness; a notion arising from the manner in which the reptile darts its long glutinous tongue at flies at the distance of several inches, and thus captures them. Taking a chamelion from its branch, and carrying the harmless creature in my hand, I have seen huts forsaken by their inmates, who fled on my approach. This susceptible animal, which so unphilosophically betrays its feelings by change of colour, is fond of wine, but is particular in its choice. Two, which were of a grass-green complexion, on concluding their potations, after sipping claret to an excess only justified by the occasion of his Majesty's birth-day, became the colour of gold speckled with brown spots.

mistaken for a broken piece of dry stick.

Holding in our indefatigable steeds, whose peculiarity of taste or of training is to start into a gallop upon mounting a hill,—the steeper the ascent the more furious being their speed,—we continued leisurely climbing the mountain, until a few cots, with the customary slip of plantain-ground, announced approach to a village. A slight descent led to a stream over which stood a rude bridge; and, beyond, rose the humble market-house, with a few black sellers and buyers. It was market-day; and sadly did the air proclaim the recent slaughter of a "bull," whose fragments, wooed by the fervent sun, widely advertised their readiness for sale. Scattered up and down the brook were the young maidens of the village, idly playing in the cool water, or busy with the labours of the laundress; soaking the garments, then laying them upon a stone in the rivulet, and pounding them vigorously with another, according to the

mode of negro purifiers, much to the detriment of the texture.

Quitting this unpretending village, we proceeded on our road, and in due time reached the brow of the steep descent which terminates at the bridge of Regent. Here the majestic cone of the Sugar-loaf rose up to view immediately in front. At the foot of this mountain lies the town, by the side of a wide and clear stream, and covering with its numerous huts and garden-plots a large extent of ground. As we crossed the bridge, the labourers, who were repairing, or pretending to repair, the structure, stared at the party of strangers with considerable independence, and seemed to fear that the arrival of white men might urge them to unwelcome exertion; for, when left to their own industry, a day's work principally consists in looking at the progress of the undertaking, and in sleeping.

Regent ranks amongst the most important of the country towns or villages. It is nearly in the centre of the colony, and

is the residence of the Manager of the mountain district. The Manager's house is a square building, incased, like those of the Europeans in general, in an outer shell of pillars and sheltered verandahs open to the air. Interior decorations have been neglected or unattainable, and its furniture was not a whit more sumptuous than that of Government-house at Freetown. The gentleman who presides over the large population of Regent, and the other villages of that management, received us with that frank politeness so characteristic of the naval officer, and which effectually associated with that distant spot the recollection of welcome and hospitality.

Whilst our host, whose magisterial office is no sinecure, dispatched matters of local business, our party strolled to the extremity of the town, through a copse of magnificent shrubs, and to a low meadow which the stream preserves cool and moist during the hottest weather. The view from this point can scarcely be exceeded,

whether in the beauty of the gently undulating land rising to the village of Charlotte, in the sublimity which reigns in the deep hanging forest and the peak of the Sugar-loaf lifting itself into the clear blue sky, or in the riotous exuberance of vegetation on every side. Some children by the brook fled upon our approach; they were unaccustomed to the sight of pale faces; for the Managers and two or three Missionaries are the sole European residents in the district.

One child, overcome with terror, dropped her basket of yams, and could not be prevailed upon to return for it whilst a white man was near, even by the offer of a big copper. A negro villager, with deeply carved and chopped face, but of intelligent countenance and well clothed, observed that the small child did not yet know that the white man was its friend, and the friend of its mother, father, and brothers; but that it would learn, as he had himself done, to thank and love the

white man, "although the white man was so ugly to look upon."

He stated that he was a carpenter and in full work; that he had built a good house, and was saving money; that the white man had taught him. He was an Ibbo by nation, and had been captured in a slave-ship, but had resided for twenty years in Sierra Leone, and had learned to appreciate the advantages of civilised life. He gave an interesting account of his own barbarous tribe; of their cruelties, their savage propensities, and their heartless practice of stealing each other in order to supply the slave-factory of the white slave-merchant. He told me that, before he had himself been seized by a treacherous friend and delivered to the slaver, he had acted in the same manner, and felt pride in the number of his victims.

Pointing to a child who was revelling in the dust near a cottage by the road-side, he observed, that, were he in his own country and found the boy thus unwatched by its mother, he should bandage its

mouth and put it into the large wallet which his countrymen constantly wear at the side for this specific purpose, and sell the little wretch for a few dollars; aware that his own children were liable to the same fate. To my inquiry whether he had any desire to revisit his tribe, he answered that he had not; that Regent was now his home, his wife was there, and his children were enjoying the instruction of the school, and could not live as the Ibbos live. Besides, he continued, they may walk into the bush and no one will steal them from me here; and if I were to return to my tribe, it is so long since I left it, that all my relations would be gone, either killed in war or sold as slaves.

On reaching the market-place, a substantial square shelter supported by stone pillars, men and women bluntly demanded money, whilst the young, as before, ran away hastily to hide themselves. In no place did I ever find the negroes less respectful to Europeans; perhaps the cause may be attributed to their length of resi-

dence,—above twenty years,—with little knowledge of any white man excepting the Manager, whose authority they clearly perceive to be delegated; and to a feeling of home and property in the place, which might make them regard our unceremonious entrance as an intrusion.

The only articles offered for sale were a small stock of kolas, ground-nuts, and small fish, vended by men and old mothers. The well-stocked and flourishing cassada, yam, and plantain grounds attached to every cot throughout the long wide streets, accounted for the slight need of provisions in the market.

As the heat was beyond endurance, and the atmosphere was choked with particles of light dust, I entered a neat mud cottage, which stood in a garden marked off from the road by stakes uniformly ranged and cut to an even height, and requested some water. The young mother who presented it had her face, shoulders, and bosom richly carved in patterns, which stood out in alto-relievo. Her maamy, wrinkled

with the effects of an old age which prematurely withers the women in these hot latitudes, was seated upon a bench before the door; and a couple of naked piccaninies, shuddering at the white men, and wisely ensconcing themselves behind the bulwark, peeped cautiously through the palings. An eye-glass became the object of intense interest with the two matrons, who were convinced at once that it could be no other than the white man's "greegree" or talisman. Now a greegree, feteesh, or charm, hangs round the neck or is suspended from the wrist of every black whose wealth enables him to defy the devil with a spell so cheaply purchased.

Africa is the nursery in which magic of every species flourishes unstunted by the trampling march of intellect. Where slavery, cannibalism, and polygamy are deemed domestic virtues, witchcraft, or the exercise of a spiritual power of working ill upon a neighbour, is the darkest, though the most frequent of crimes, and, when guilt is established by the appalling

ordeal of the red water, it is invariably visited with condign punishment. All may wear a charm, but simply as a protective, not as an evil influence. Seeing the curiosity of the young woman was directed to the glass, I with difficulty induced her to look through it. What she beheld in imagination, may not be guessed; but, dropping the "greegree," she uttered a cry, and retreated into the interior of the hut. The magician followed; when she rushed into the open air, and took refuge by the side of her old mother in front of the dwelling. A ceremony of enchantment, suggested at the moment, was performed, and she observed it with anxiety. A circle was drawn in the dust of the yard, two or three small bits of paper were thrown into it, the eye-glass was raised to heaven, whirled round three times, and deposited within the line; the operator pointed to the sun and to the earth, and uttered some sentence of Latin or French, I forget which, and then entered the sacred boundary. To this moment the woman

had stood immovable, and wrapt in attention to the proceedings; but when I fixed my eye upon her, and raised towards her my outstretched finger, the poor creature screamed loudly, sprang forward, and fell to the earth, where she continued shrieking and rolling in the greatest excitement, grasping handfuls of dust and throwing them over her person, until it appeared prudent to end a joke commenced without premeditation, and only attempted in order to discover how far he was a conjurer who till that day had not dreamed of possessing powers of sorcery.

Tranquillity having been restored, and the convulsed having assured herself upon repeated examinations that the "evil eye" had neither withered her hand, nor deprived her of sight, nor produced any corporeal malady whatever, I went into the yam and arrow-root grounds, and passing through a path between high poles green to the top with the clustering herbage, was directed by my forgiving hostess to descend to the brook, where her

eldest daughter might probably be found, who would supply me with oranges, that most refreshing gift of the tropics. I was soon by the water, where the stream widening forms a deep basin, dark with the shadow of the overhanging mountain. To tempt the swimmer from the luxury of the cold bath, which was alive with a shoal of restless black children, was impossible, and would have been positively cruel: but the walk had not been altogether useless; it had discovered the neatness and order, the skill and industry of the gardener; it had proved him to have risen from the level of the mere savage to that of a useful member of the social body, to have acquired knowledge of the value of property and of the means of improving it. The interior of the hut, with its little stock of European furniture, denoted comfort.

The only definite and well-ascertained case of cannibalism at Sierra Leone which came to my hearing occurred at this town. My informant might be trusted; he was a

respectable man, and filled the situation of schoolmaster at Regent at the time when the deed was perpetrated. According to his statement, about three or four years ago, one of the Liberated residents returned home after a long absence from the town with human hands, and other portions of human flesh, in his wallet. He was apprehended and taken before the Manager; when he made no scruple of declaring "that he had eaten the remainder of the body, and intended to make a meal on the contents of his bag; that having wandered into the bush, he had become hungry, and had watched until a townsman, weaker than himself, came near the place where he lay in concealment; that he had sprung upon him, overpowered and killed the man, and had ever since subsisted upon his body, until, having consumed nearly the whole, he had returned to his home." He did not understand the act to have been a moral or social offence; it had been the custom of his people. He had not been tempted

to eat human flesh before, only because he had had sufficient food.

The existence of cannibals in Africa has been disputed, with scarcely a better reason, it appears to me, than that of the "old man," Ansumana Camara at Magbelly, who maintained the utter impossibility of water becoming hard from cold, *because he had never seen it.*

In the heterogeneous commixture of tribes in the British colony, I discovered none which doubted the practice of cannibalism; but none of the established residents would plead guilty to the charge themselves, or admit it of their own nation. They generally agreed in attributing it to the savages of the river Bonny.

It is difficult, I must confess, to look at the face of a Bonny man, and from his sinister aspect to conceive him guiltless. Many of the natives on the northern portions of the windward coast associate sacred or superstitious feelings with the dead, which would probably prevent them from

masticating their friends; to the south, however, as in the kingdom of Dahomy, parents are stated to find repose in the sepulchral stomachs of their children as soon as infirmity of age begins to make life burdensome; and the hordes, generally, bordering the Bights of Benin and Biafra enjoy the reputation of more atrocious tastes than those who dwell between the Kroo or Grain coast and the Gambia.

Amongst some hundred slaves recently captured off the old Calabar river, two men, immediately after landing, were pointed out to me as cannibals. I questioned them through the interpreter; they did not deny the fact, but grinned in good-humoured acquiescence, displaying a double row of formidable teeth, chipped and filed down to sharp points resembling the edge of a saw. This alone, however, is certainly no proof of cannibalism; it is considered by black dentists as the greatest ornament.

The streets of Regent are laid out, according to the universal plan, in parallel

rows, intersecting at right angles, wherever the nature of the ground permits. This uniformity of succeeding hut and garden is not relieved by public edifices, excepting the market, the Manager's house, and a building erected as a church, but employed as a school-room. Situation alone renders the villages of Sierra Leone pleasing to the eye; and the simple map of one will almost serve for the whole. Several villages have churches rising prominently in the picture, but receiving small congregations or none. Spiritual instruction was evidently contemplated by the Government in England, and the intended establishment of a diocese seems probable from the prodigious number of church-clocks paternally exported for the colony. At Charlotte or at Gloucester is a collection of these ponderous church-clocks, sufficiently numerous to supply all the market-towns of a county in Great Britain. None have yet been put together, nor will be.

The population of the mountain dis-

tricts seemed to be fortunate in their Manager. He evidently took an interest in his charge, and devoted his talents and time to their welfare. A principal evil in the management is clearly the need of co-operation from whites of respectable rank and suitable education, for it is impossible to plan and at the same time to superintend personally every detail. The consequence of the present system must be the appointment, at times, of inefficient Managers, owing to the humble recompense offered to this most useful and laborious class of officers, which induces few men of education or rank in society to accept the employment.

In real importance, although not in local esteem, the Managers of districts hold place next to the Governor of the colony. To them is mainly committed the civilisation of the Peninsula. Instead of meagre salaries, much inferior to those of pensioned clerks in the public offices of Freetown; instead of labours of mind and body continued without assistance, and

an authority limited by the Governor and removable at caprice, rulers of the several districts should be raised in the scale of society, and inducements should be held out to men of enlarged and cultivated minds; the assistance of the well-informed should be afforded, and, what is important, they should be less obviously dependent upon the changeable will of successive Governors. The salaries of civil officers and clerks in the Government offices at Freetown range downwards from £2000 to £3000 sterling per annum, some with retiring pensions of above £1000 per annum upon return to England; whilst the Manager or sub-governor of a district of many miles, containing several towns and villages, in few instances receives £200 per annum, and obtains no pension: he feels, too, a constant liability to be dismissed at a day's notice, should the Governor exercise his undoubted right to appoint another.

The Sugar-loaf mountain, at whose foot stands the Manager's house, is considered to be the highest point in Sierra

Leone; but the constant undulations of the long mountain chain, which runs throughout the entire Peninsula from north to south, offer two or three peaks which would seem to dispute this superior dignity, and the blacks have uniformly pointed out to me the blue apex of a more distant mountain-top as the highest. No barometrical admeasurement has been taken, and I felt desirous of corroborating by one the result of Captain Owen's trigonometrical observation.

The difficulties of ascent are so formidable that not many white men have attempted it, and fewer still have succeeded in reaching the highest summit. The ascent and return cannot be well accomplished in one day; no pathway exists, and the necessity of cutting one through the rank vegetation retards progress. The woods abound in leopards, baboons, and apes in great variety; the ground swarms with boa-constrictors, serpents, and guanas, rendering walking a matter of circumspection; elephants, too, are

asserted to live in considerable numbers amongst the forests from this point southwards, having disappeared in the immediate vicinity of Freetown; but the precipitous nature of the ground renders the correctness of the assertion questionable, although I have had their haunts pointed out to me by natives who professed to have seen them. The capital is, however, still entered by the more audacious natives of the bush, who disdain to retreat before encroaching civilisation. It is not long since a huge baboon entered the heart of Freetown, seized a man, and destroyed him before assistance could be rendered; and during the last week of my abode in the colony, a leopard twice ventured into the town, and each time, although pursued and fired at, safely carried off a sheep into its neighbouring lair. Wild monkeys are sometimes to be found impudently chattering on the trees within the town itself,—a fact I soon discovered; for happening, whilst watching some Kroo wrestlers on the beach below, to perceive

a beautifully painted cundoo peeping and coquettishly nodding from behind a tree, I offered a reward to a boy if he would capture the brilliant reptile. He had barely climbed the trunk, when he hastened down again to the ground, exclaiming, "Jacko live there; jacko live upon top stick;" and truly there grinned in anything but gentle defiance a monkey of no despicable dimensions, who however had the wisdom to hide himself amongst the branches without delay.

On quitting Regent, a plan had been formed for ascending the Sugar-loaf, and my host kindly undertook to procure guides to accompany us. At Freetown, however, no mountain barometer could be obtained, and the plan was abandoned.

KISSEY

is in one of the river districts, at a distance of three miles from Freetown, higher up the estuary or river. Being approached by a comparatively good road for horse or pedestrian, it enjoys more

direct communication with the capital than any other village of importance in the colony. Having recorded a visit to Regent, I shall ride to Kissey, rather for the sake of introducing road-side occurrences, than of indulging in lengthened description of a village founded on the same principles, laid out with the same uniformity, managed according to the same system, and developing in equally interesting degree the progress made by its Liberated inhabitants in the scale of being.

Upon my way to Kissey I met with the first Albino child which I saw in Africa. Its parents dwell on the outskirts of Settler-town, and are as black as the blackest of Cain's* descendants. The child itself had a clear complexion, as clear as that of the gentlest fair of the fair sex in Britain, but much less agreeable. In the Albino children of negroes the transparency of the skin is singularly offensive.

* Some Physiologists consider the "mark" set upon Cain to have been a negro skin!

The present monstrosity was about four years of age, with hair like short knots of entangled white worsted. Its eyes were perpetually rolling as in search of an object which it could not fix, and betokened that idiotcy which always more or less accompanies this deviation from the rule of nature, and which would be more pitiable did not early death generally close the days of the Albino. Sickly children are usually the favourites of their parents; it is so with the Albino offspring of the Africans.

Next to Settler-town is the suburb of the Mahometans, always crowded, and conveying the impression of petty mercantile activity. The whole scene is quite Eastern, and leads the Englishman to forget his geography. There are to be seen long robes, morocco sandals, peaked caps, and Arab features. Groups are seated upon the ground cross-legged, gossiping; or one reading the sacred Koran with a loud sing-song voice to a circle of attentive listeners; others counting the beads

of their gay rosary. The Mandingo, the Foulah, and Serracoola, or travelling merchant, are here. Some of the latter, from the far interior, are uncouth mortals of evil aspect; and bear in the hand a bow of bamboo taller than themselves, and a quiver of arrows suspended at their back. They are gifted with most atrocious countenances, indicating cunning and ferocity. They are clothed in a full cotton garment, and wear wide-brimmed coarse straw hats, with crowns shaped like the dome of St. Paul's, and bristling on all sides, like porcupines, with the projecting ends of the straw.

In this suburb I met with that interesting Serracoola, the chief guide of Mungo Park in his last and fatal journey, who quitted the lamented traveller only the day preceding his death. He is a tall gaunt man; his arms have been perforated by many a bullet-wound; his features are striking, and his expression dignified; his prominent Arab nose, thin lips, and quick eye, leave no character in common with

the negro excepting the complexion. He has for some time resided in Freetown without ostensible object or employment; but wise men hinted strong suspicions of his being deeply engaged in the profitable trade which the British have declared illegal, but to which the Africans cling as a national and inalienable right. He told me he was about to visit Teemba, the celebrated capital of the Foulahs, on the road to Timbuctoo, whose gates have been perseveringly closed against white men; and a strong impulse to attempt the adventure led me to urge his acceptance of the white man as his companion. For long he simply persisted in stating that it was impossible,—that white men could not go to Teemba; but at length appeared to acquiesce, allowing a week's preparation for an expedition of nearly a thousand miles. Subsequent events, however, negatived the intention.

Beyond the "bull" establishment of Betsy Carew is a frail wooden bridge over the ravine which bounds the capital

to the east. Hence the road to Kissey runs over a rocky common carpeted with dry parched grass, then between negro huts and country mansions of white colonists, to the race-course. Happy is the horse that arrives so far without having dislocated a joint in the numerous holes which make the highway a prolonged trap. To the right of the race-course the road strikes off at the foot of an overhanging mountain, the woods upon whose sides are enduring wholesale conflagration, in order that the soil may be applied to agriculture. It is common to see the broad green leaves of the plantain and banana springing up in the midst of the burnt stumps and charred shafts of forest trees. These are suffered to remain, not from indolence, nor, as in Canada, because the additional ground on which they stand would not repay the expense and trouble of removing them; but because, if they were uprooted, the torrents which deluge the country during the rainy seasons, descriptively called in the

language of the natives Bulla-kont, or the "sweep-bush" month, would force down the loose soil from the mountain side into the valleys and leave the rock bare; a destruction only averted by a practice unsightly to the refined farmer.

Coffee, which flourishes exuberantly in such situations, is not cultivated excepting by a few Europeans, for experiment or family consumption; neither is the vine to be seen, although it is said to thrive here productively and of full flavour. At this neglect none can rejoice but the lover of the picturesque: for the least picturesque of sights are a vineyard and a coffee plantation.

Whilst pausing to admire a mountain torrent, which, never failing in the hottest weather, rushes down in a succession of struggles and leaps in a course not probably of less than two thousand feet, a black, uncomfortably mounted upon a steed whose vices counterbalanced his single virtue of fleetness, flew to the spot, and nearly lost his seat by the shock of a

sudden halt. The little Foulah horses have no trot, no medium pace, and are impatient of control when another chances to be a-head. Our persecuted friend had been leisurely walking his steed, with the halter well held by both hands, when the brute, perceiving a fellow-quadruped near the stream, started away at speed to the infinite terror of the cavalier; nor relaxed, nor had bowels of compassion for his rider, until he made a dead stop by my side. When the negro had partially recovered heart and breath, he expatiated upon the fault of the animal.

"Him bad rogue; love not to run; then love run too much; then love not run too much;" meaning that at first he was obstinate and would not run, then ran away with his rider and would not be checked, and then suddenly stopped short.

I demanded how far we were from Kissey, to which he replied "Kissey live not far too much; catch Kissey soon; catch Kissey no time."

The entrance to the village afforded an example of that simple kindness which shines amongst the dark barbarism of the savage like the silver sparkling of the medusæ upon the black surface of the ocean in the depth of night. An old man, white-haired and blind, bent and feeble, and resting upon a staff, was slowly walking, led by a young child. He advanced to a cottage by the road-side, and, the moment he was perceived, the children came from it, and stood by silently and respectfully; whilst the father stepped forward, took the unfortunate object by the hand, drew him to the rude bench by the door, and, having seated him in the shade, brought him refreshment, unsought and unrequited. The scene was patriarchal. Necessity for poor-laws does not enter into the political economy of the hospitable African. Idiots, the blind, and the aged are sacred to the savage. The insane pass through their villages securely and pitied; every assistance is volunteered; the infirm and the grey-haired are re-

garded as claiming filial respect; a contrast to the treatment which would be accorded to them in the villages of England, where the weak-minded are too often taunted by a heartless rabble, and the infirm must submit to the tender mercies of the parish overseer.

In Kissey itself there is little to excite particular interest. The church, a neat white building, the schools under the superintendence of the missionaries, and the fever hospital, situated immediately over the sea about a mile from the village, form the exceptions. The fever is that pestilence which has given to Sierra Leone its ill name. It is supposed to be infectious, and therefore when the diseased cargo of human beings has been removed from the slave-ship, all who are suffering from this disagreeable illness are separated from the rest, and conveyed to the lazaretto out of the town. The number of slaves so affected at the time of their release is frequently great. In the slave schooner La Pantica, captured by

the Fair Rosamond, and brought into Sierra Leone during my visit, the total captured had been 315, of whom 40 had died between her detention and arrival. Of the remainder, eight or ten died in the first week after liberation; the majority of the survivors were miserably persecuted by ophthalmia and dysentery, and fifty were sent to the hospital for fever at Kissey.

The building is insulated, and within an enclosure bounded by high walls; it is remote from any other habitation: no communication with the healthy of the colony is permitted, a wise precaution; for although this fever, differing in some respects from the more fatal scourge of the West Indies, may not have been proved infectious, the reverse has not been ascertained. My own slight experience leads me to consider that it was not so. When daily visiting the King's yard, crowded with new captives, I spent much time by the side of the miserable victims to white

man's cupidity, and have remained long in the shed where the poor creatures lay upon a mat on the bare ground, their skin, usually cold as that of a corpse, burning with unnatural fire. I used no precaution, but have freely laid my hand upon the hot and throbbing temples, and given relief by binding round them a cool moist handkerchief. It is, however, said, that white men catch infection from whites, but never from blacks: it may be so; "*quot Doctores, tot doctrinæ.*"

Rides to the villages never failed to present some new specimen of negro customs. At such times a European, coming unexpectedly upon the natives, surprises them in domestic or social employments which they shrink from volunteering to white man's observation; such as affectionate children, with the woolly head of a father or mother resting upon their knees, assiduously studying parasitical entomology to the relief of their grateful parents—a useful and a favourite employment, indi-

genous in Lisbon and in Africa. Other indescribable habits may be observed whose sole merit is their rarity.

A more pleasant sight is that of a young mother, or country maiden, coming forward with characteristic bashfulness to offer a kola-seed to the stranger,—token of esteem and of friendship, won perhaps by a kind word or a smile in passing; for the hearts of these unsophisticated beings are sensitive to kindness. The kola is not unlike a Spanish chestnut in size and form, but is covered with a skin like that of a bean, either pink or white, and marked with a narrow broad line passing entirely round it. It is considered as great a luxury by the African, as opium by a Turk, or pigtail by a seaman. It is ever in the mouth of those who can afford to purchase it, or who have received it from a friend, or from a love-sick girl. Highly astringent, it so saturates the palate with the bitter principle, that water tastes like eau sucrée, or, as the

black epicures express the phenomenon, "water live sweet in mouth."

The juice, at first colourless, becomes brown, but after a short exposure to the atmosphere changes to a brilliant red, dying the mouth and teeth. The value of the kola, which is very capricious in its place of growth, may be calculated from the information of a Timmanee, that "four hundred kola-seeds would purchase a horse, and forty would buy a wife."

It was not until away from the customs of white men in the territory of the Timmanees, that I learned to appreciate the virtues of the bitter kola. Climate and circumstances frequently induce habits which in themselves appear needless and absurd. Whilst gliding in an open canoe on the bosom of the Mitomba, in full exposure to a torturing sun, or struggling through the intricate forest paths with an exertion more adapted to a northern latitude, scorched at one hour and the next seeking in vain shelter from the drenching

of a tornado storm, a store of kola-seeds, the gift of ephemeral friends, was found to be refreshing and a support. Nor can its use be blamed as a dessert, where coarsely sifted rice and rank palm-oil form the only meal that can be obtained.

In amicable meetings of chiefs and kings, three kolas are exchanged in earnest of peaceful intention; hosts offer them to distinguished guests; and should the timid maiden venture to present the eloquent seed to a lover, he feels that his vows have been heard and have been accepted. In truth, the kola is poetic as well as astringent.

The villages of the newly located slaves in Sierra Leone differed little from the native towns which I afterwards visited amongst the independent tribes. The chief distinction consisted in the regular planning of the streets, straight, wide, and at right angles, and in the little plot of garden-ground adjoining each dwelling. The towns of the savage in the wild woods of the interior are aggregations of

mud huts, clustered without attempt at order, and raised so closely together, that at first it might seem as though ground was of excessive value, instead of being of none. The best passages, for they cannot be called streets, through the great town of Magbelly, were so narrow that two persons could not at all places pass; whilst those of the fortified capital of my fine old friend Ali Mamee Caba, King of Rokel, were much worse.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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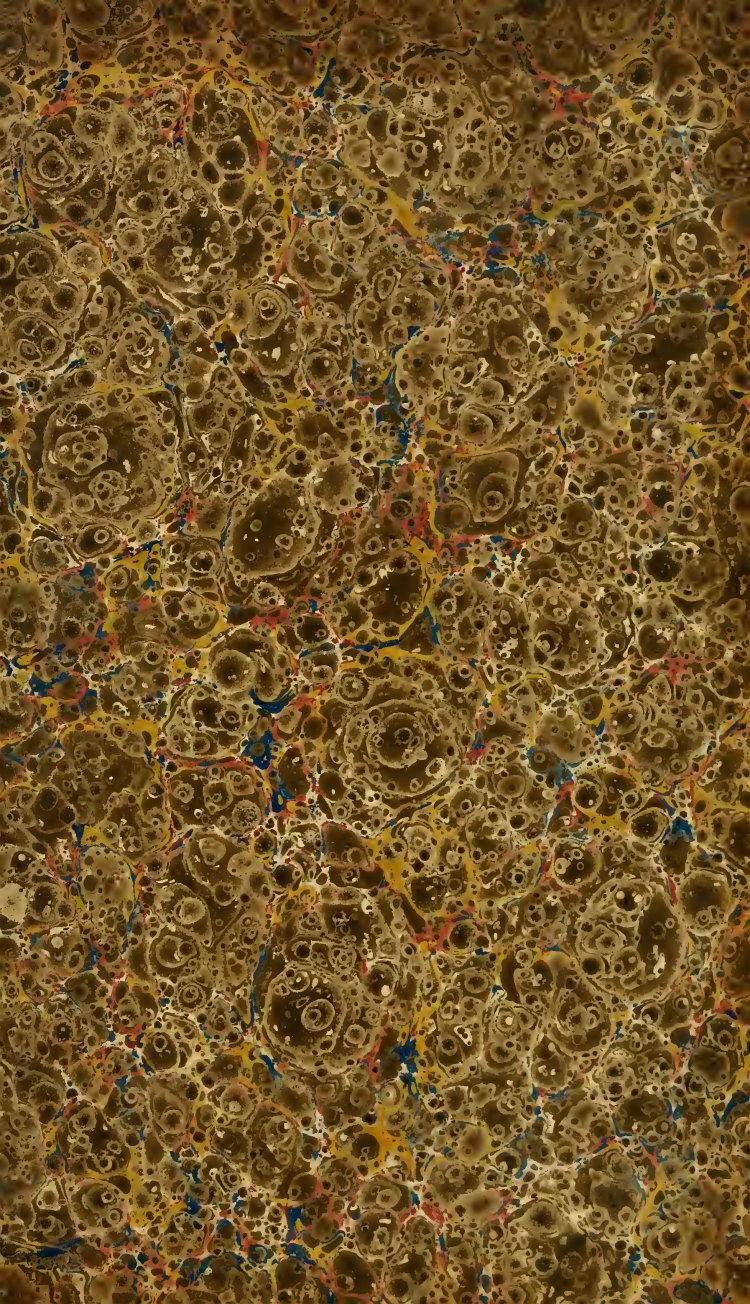

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